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VOLUME ONE, ISSUE NO TWENTY

EARLY WINTER 2004

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# GOD HELP US

## REVEREND ROVE'S RED RUBES ROCK RICKETY REPUBLIC RIGHTEOUS RABBLE RATIFIES ROGUE RULER'S REIGN

### CONTINENTAL TREK RALEIGH'S VOTERS & SCHWINNS STATES

Five Swing State Activists  
Pick Ballots' Krypto Locks  
With Pens & Perseverance

### A TOUR DE VOTE

BY ARIELLA COHEN

It takes four days to drive the 2,809 miles from Portland, Oregon to Washington, D.C., but this fall, with the help of a blue Giant hybrid ten-speed and nine other young people on bicycles, I made the trip in ninety. Over the three months leading up to the 2004 election, we bicycled to cities across the country, joining up along the route with community organizations to register new voters and educate people about their rights at the polls.

Each state has its own electoral code and its own method of administering elections. Some are more restrictive than others. For example, Maryland prohibits convicted felons from ever voting again, while Pennsylvania re-enfranchises them as soon as they're released from prison. Oregonians get their ballots delivered in the mail three weeks ahead of time, while some Ohioans have to wait until three days after the race is already over. But no matter what the local election laws, everywhere we went we were met with battalions of volunteers, idealistic and hungry alike, who took up the temporary working papers of the canvasser in order to get out the vote.

The following interviews, conducted shortly after the November 2 election, will hopefully help begin a discussion about our electoral processes and the possibility of building more inclusive models, one state at a time.

As director of the Office of Community Justice and Outreach in Philadelphia's jails, part of Wilfredo Rojas' job is to make sure eligible inmates receive ballots.

Ariella Cohen: Did Bush win this election honestly, or did he steal it? Wilfredo Rojas: This election was a victory for democracy. A huge number of new voters came out and there wasn't fraud on the same scale as 2000. Of course we are still struggling to enfranchise groups of people—inmates especially—and give everyone access to ballots, but generally I would say that the Republican win is legitimate.

AC: Were you surprised by the outcome?

WR: Clearly, there is a divided electorate and that opposition got people to the polls. They felt passionate about the election because the issues were clear. Usually elections revolve around the candidates' personalities, but this time the opinions were dis-

### No Suitcases for this Fellow!

BY LORD WHIMSY

My family has been here 300 years. My commitments and convictions define me; my friends, work and loved ones are all here. Furthermore, as someone committed to the Enlightenment ideals that brought this republic into being and others to the light of democracy, I have a solemn duty to help bring this country back to its founding principles, and to take it from those who have hijacked it.

No, there are more important things than my own personal fulfillment; to leave when my country needs me most is nothing short of moral cowardice. This country may not deserve us right now, but to cut and run when faced with adversity renders us undeserving of the more just society we hope to build.

I stay and fight.

### Retreating to the Private

BY KEN KALFUS

Personal history always informs your appreciation of current events. For me, this moment in American history recalls 1991 in Belgrade, where I was living at the time, at the start of the Balkan wars. I'm not thinking as much of the former Yugoslavia's terrible ethnic conflicts as I am of the more profound, murderous division in Yugoslav society between the liberal humanists and the nationalists of all stripes. The parties of the right appropriated the symbols of patriotism and religious faith, dominated the broadcast media and launched a series of ruinous wars that cemented their hold on political power. Intellectuals were derided as effete fools and liberals who preached tolerance were derided as traitors. With the collapse of the peace-time economy, the nationalists' criminal sponsors lined their pockets. I don't think it's too much of a stretch to compare the aims and methods of George W. Bush to those of Slobodan Milosevic.

What do liberals do when they live in illiberal regimes? Whether they're in Belgrade, Tehran, Brezhnev's Russia or Pinochet's Chile, they may continue to pursue whatever politics are permitted, but I think the preservation and growth of humanistic values depend more on the tasks we perform in our private lives and in local civil society. That means taking care of our families, teaching our kids well, serving our communities, taking personal measures to preserve the environment, practicing honesty, reading good books and engaging in intelligent, earnest conversation. These sound like small consolations, but they change the world every day.

### THE PITCH

BY DON SILVER

From: Aaron

To: Jerry N., CBS

Jerry, what would you say if I told you I could deliver 55,000,000 television viewers to CBS for the first episode of a new show? You'd say, "bring it on!" wouldn't you?

Introducing: "Shadow Government": Reality TV meets the election of 2004, starring John Kerry and John Edwards as president and vice president of the United States (we plan to share set costs with the West Wing), showing the nearly-elected administration behind closed doors setting policy, wrangling with Republicans, and responding to real world events as they happen!

Think about it—Republicans running the country with real time live input from the Democrats. The Bush Administration caters to the base, and we bring regular people to the cash registers. I guarantee you this will change politics!

I'm still waiting to hear back from the Edwards camp. I'd like to open with Elizabeth and the whole breast cancer thing. Take the cameras into the waiting room, get close with the family, do the biopsy like it was "CSI Miami"—get the cells swimming around in a Petri dish ... I want something that will hook women, something people can rally around. We can bring men in later with something technical, like global warming. Get the big movie studios and the music industry to sponsor it—"only emit gas at home in front of your TV" (he-he).

I've talked with the Kerry people. They want to open with something strong and presidential—a ceremony with a foreign dignitary, a secret meet-

### ONE EXILE IN MEXICO CAN'T PUT HEX ON TYRANNOSAURUS TEX

A Border Town's Streets  
Turn to Gullies and Mud  
Under One Party Rule

### SEÑOR BUSH: NO AMIGO

BY MARA HVISTENDAHL

REYNOSA, Mexico—Until a few years ago, this was a squatter colony, and it isn't difficult to understand why. Until the very poor arrived here on the border to look for work in the maquiladoras, the land was not considered habitable. When it rains the streets become a muddy morass, and lacking galoshes, the women wear high-heeled boots to the store on the corner. To avoid making the mud deeper with their bathwater, dishwater, and laundry water, people dig canals out of the mud. As the streets dry, rusted pick-up trucks cut them up into dusty rollercoasters. Residents fill in the canals, the potholes, and the tire tracks with trash. And then it rains again.

Things don't have to be this way. People own their land (the neighborhood even has a name: Colonia Esperanza, the neighborhood of hope), and there are measures that could be taken to make it more livable. Aside from the city paving the streets which would be nothing short of a miracle, it could send tractors to flatten out the bumps, for example. But in the seven months I have spent in Reynosa over the last four years, the first time I saw a tractor here was last week.

"What is going on?" I asked Verónica, the woman I am staying with, as the hulking machine rolled by her house. "Oh, that," she answered. "They do it every time there is an election, and then we don't see them for three years." Tacked to the sides of the tractor were huge photos of a mayoral candidate. Verónica was sitting with a neighbor, chatting, and they laughed at how the tractor driver only made one round of the block—enough to get the message across but not to smooth out the terrain—and then moved on. Another tractor, with signs for another candidate, showed up a few days later.

The election of Vicente Fox in 2000, after seventy-one years of rule by the Partido Revolucionario Institucional, got pundits talking about a resurgence of democracy in Mexico. Indeed, many people here believe that Fox's party, the Partido Acción Nacional, is improving their lives (although this comes from

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### EDITORIAL

The news media and the political establishment have once again granted George W. Bush the benefit of the doubt, something of which he has proven himself, time and time again, utterly undeserving. We are concerned about the many unanswered questions which have been raised regarding the counting of votes in Ohio and Florida. First and foremost, why has most every miscounted vote discovered after the election been in Mr. Bush's favor? His first term was taken illegitimately, and we are unconvinced that his second will be any different.

### PUFFY, JOVI, MOBY DIDN'T DO DIDDY FOR LOSER PARTY

Soros Bucks, Morris Spots,  
Chomsky Blog, Foer Pals  
All Nice But Not Enough

### SUPERIORITY COMPLEX

BY CHRISTINE SMALLWOOD

My sharp, brilliant, world-traveling mother, who broke gender barriers as an executive in the boys' clubs of the corporate world in the 1970s, isn't interested in popularity. She watches MTV sometimes, to see what the kids are up to, but when it comes right down to it, she couldn't care less about what's cool. She doesn't have time to be pampered to, and she's not interested in a politician feeling her pain. Like actor Ron Silver, who made waves in Hollywood when he spoke at this year's GOP convention, she thinks it's important to stand out from and up to your peers. And like Ron, she cast her vote this year for George W. Bush.

When I asked her why Bush won, why groups like America Coming Together (ACT) and MoveOn and Downtown for Democracy and IndyVoter and Music for America and Vote or Die and Vote for Change and Rock the Vote didn't save us, she said that the Democrats have a bad attitude. And not in a good, James Dean way. In an obnoxious, condescending way.

Apparently, my mom—who, in September, was *this close* to voting for Kerry—got so tired of Democrats acting like anyone who voted for

Bush must be an ignorant, provincial, flat-earth fool, that she just stopped paying attention. She's usually gregarious, fiesty, and up for any debate, but she eventually refused to discuss politics with her co-workers and acquaintances. And, she suspects—and I'm inclined to agree with her—that thousands across the country did the same. They're not the secret Republicans who talk liberal but, all alone in the booth with the ghosts of shoe bombers, vote Bush; she and her kin will tell you their opinions, if you ask them nicely. They're not trying to hide. But they do feel a little persecuted.

A senior staff member of MoveOn PAC told me that it is precisely this attitude problem among

Kerry supporters that cost them the opportunity to reach Republicans. "It's easy to think you're smarter," she said. "But [name calling] is the anti-strategy; it's the lazy strategy. It's the way to feel good about sitting in a coffee shop. It's a legitimizer for your inactivity."

turn to CAMPAIGN, page 6

### A Note to the Reader

On the night of November 2

we sat agape in front of the television, watching the television men preside over the brightly colored maps of an imaginary country. This is right where the president likes us to be. He is not a well-spoken man, and prefers letting the results of his plans speak for themselves to piecing a sentence together. The effects of his first four years have been devastating, and if you've glanced at these pages or any others over the last hundred weeks, you're already well aware. We can only predict, as you likely have, that his next four years will be even worse. We wish we could point you to the scapegoat or silver lining here, but there is neither.

As terrible as his victory is, the result itself says nothing about the state of our country. The wise were not outnumbered by fools on Election Day, but outfoxed by the men who draw the county lines and guard the gates outside the polling booth. The red versus the blue is convenient shorthand for any armchair anthropologist paid to churn out a few thousand words a week, but it is a poor substitute for knowing one's own country. A mythical wall has been erected between the "two Americas," and its lines are almost arbitrary. Had one in forty Kerry-voting Pennsylvanians changed their minds in the voting booth or one in four Kerry-voting Philadelphians decided to stay home on November 2, the Keystone State would now be part of "Red America," and we'd be reading headlines about Bush's "electoral landslide."

Nothing changed on November 2. George Bush is still the president. We are still aligned against him, as we are compelled to by our beliefs in peace among nations, equality among men, and the obligation of the government to be honest with the governed.

For a time, John Kerry was a vessel for these beliefs, but his defeat does not equal ours. Fifty-six million Americans have had enough of this failed president, and so long as each of us remains bent on seeing his agenda defeated, it is he who should be afraid. We stand ready to do whatever is in our power to erase the awful mark the president intends to leave on history. With time, our rights and alliances will be restored, the wealth of the land will be returned to the people, and the world will no longer have to live in fear of America. Our work will not cease until history forgets this little man who rose too high, and there is plenty of work to be done.

### Let Them Eat Cookies

BY BRYANT PALMER

On the morning of November 3, I began my sixth grade English classes with this writing prompt: "If I were president..." Here's a selection of responses from my students:

If I were president I would ban homework.  
If I were president I would stop the war in Iraq.  
If I were president I would do everything that's happening in Iraq.  
If I were president I would support gay marriage.  
If I were president I would let people who are gay get married and not take away a woman's right to choose.  
If I were president I would make sure abortion doesn't become illegal.  
If I were president I would redecorate the White House and make it bigger.  
If I were president I would cancel school.  
If I were president I wouldn't start a draft.  
If I were president I would work with other countries to make peace.

In case it's not clear from the responses, my students are overwhelmingly Democratic; I teach at a reform Jewish day school in Manhattan, after all. Still, standing in front of the classroom on Wednesday morning and listening to these young and hopeful and enthusiastic responses that reflect in so many ways tolerance and concern for the welfare of others, I was struck by how different the responses might be from sixth graders in a red state like, say, Alabama, where I grew up.

Several classes from different grades gathered in our auditorium to watch Kerry's concession speech that afternoon, and not once did a teacher have to ask a student to pay attention; we were all stunned into silence. By the end of the day, the most frequent comment I'd heard from students and teachers alike was, "I can't believe Bush won."

Since the election, there's been much talk of the enormous gap between the beliefs of people in red and blue states. Some have suggested that we urbanites are out of touch with the average American. I'm not sure if that's true, but I am sure of this: I'm happy living in my blue state and teaching my blue students at my blue school, and win or lose, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Bryant Palmer can be contacted at [bryantpalmer3@hotmail.com](mailto:bryantpalmer3@hotmail.com)

### BANANA REPUBLIC PUTS SELF IN HANDS OF MONKEY MAN

Our Oval Office Squatter  
Wrangles Four Year Lease  
From Lazy Landlords

### NECKS ELECT NOOSE

BY ALEXANDER SWARTWOUT

America is the greatest damned mass of foolish, ignorant peasantry the world has ever produced. Not once before in the human race's mutable existence has there been a nation of such monumental idiocy; and what's more astounding is that history has given these dopes *self-determination*. In the exercise of this self-determination, America (if we are not so skeptical but as to actually believe the tally) has chosen to let George W. Bush lead it for another four critical years, and we are at once given a demonstration of our extraordinary mass moronism, and of the stunning depth of our ancestors' genius.

Now it might seem to go against my famous tempered humanity to say such a thing as this—to argue that I, in fact, *know better* than sixty million American citizens. How can I, you ask, call the whole race stupid and still claim to admire it as a humanist must? Well, this is exactly what I am arguing. I *do* know better than the lot of you: it is the singular reason that I have taken up the mantle of public philosopher. I know that the *sensible* choice this Tuesday past would have been to exterminate the presidency of Mr. Bush, and to every one of those who cast their vote for this outcome, I offer that you are a buffoon and an intellectual stumblebum, if you love your country and your species. But unlike the rest of my pundits colleagues, who will be reeling for months once they have finally summoned the muster to resume their work, I will not dwell on the outcome. You are idiots, all, but there is method to it—and it is my job, also, to understand this.

Under such circumstances as our nation today finds itself—where the immense mass of citizens are half-educated ingrates, where the people are completely cut off from their own experience of the wider world by the extraordinary power of technology and informative media, where religion and superstition have filled the mushy minds of an entire generation of frightened recluses—under such circumstances as these, how are we to celebrate the idea of democracy, how are we to wish for the rule of the majority, when indeed the majority is not fit to rule themselves? Msrs. Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and the rest have devised just such a conundrum

### turn to AMERICA page 3

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## THE PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT

## COMMENTARY

## Appealing to the Base

BY JUSTIN VOGT

**C**omfortably ensconced in the friendly environs of a Fox News studio, the Turd Blossom gazed toward a monitor. On it, a liberal critic of George W. Bush complained that the president had won reelection by stoking the "fears and passions of the evangelical right" and that, during the course of a "dishonest campaign," the president had "divided the nation with gay-baiting."

The almost visibly salivating Fox News host awaited a caustic response from the Turd Blossom, as President Bush—unwilling to let his chief strategist's britches grow too tight—sometimes calls Karl Rove. (The name colorfully denotes a round pile of bovine waste.)

"Well," said Rove, "I think it's a sad commentary. This fellow seems to think the American people are driven to vote in record numbers by fear and an appeal to base emotion."

How could the poor fellow have gotten such an idea? Certainly not from Bush campaign ads like "Wolves," which so accurately and reasonably depicts the world as it truly is: a dark, scary forest teeming with awful monsters that will eat us up if we are weak little boys and girls. Surely no sensible voter could construe such a message as an appeal to fear or base emotion.

Yes, stunning things can emerge from the normally pursed lips of the Turd Blossom. But the president also calls Rove "the architect" of his victory, and if there is any one person most responsible for our current predicament, it is indeed Rove. The man is the living incarnation of four decades of conservative strategizing that achieved a lurid climax in last Tuesday's national orgy of willful ignorance. He embodies the alchemy of the Right that has enabled Republicans to build a national political coalition whose strength is matched only by its improbability. Rove—perhaps the "Turd Architect" is the most suitable nickname—has succeeded in building his party a new house of worship and filling it with parishioners convinced that the party of Mammon is also the party of Jesus.

The question is this: how do we knock the thing down without killing everyone inside? Because the truth is that if progressive ideals are going to get a fair hearing in our lifetimes, we need some of those congregants to file out from behind Rove's pews and join our side.

Democrats widely agree that their party and its candidates have failed to connect with a large segment of the electorate on a broad range of social, cultural, and spiritual issues that have been conveniently mislabeled as "moral values." But liberal and conservative commentators have both begun to question the accuracy of election day exit polls that named these "moral values" as the issue most important to voters. And even Rove points out that the proportion of people who voted primarily on substantive religious issues did not increase significantly this year.

It's true that liberals could do a better job articulating coherent positions on moral, religious, and cultural issues. But what bothers me about the advice of these commentators is that it focuses on how to communicate with a cer-

tain segment of people by better understanding how they conceive of what they want and then feeding them language that is designed to resonate with them. It short, it sounds like consumer research.

That's the style of politics Republicans have perfected over the past decade with the help of market research gurus like Frank Luntz: target the groups you need, find out what words and images they respond to, and re-package the things you're already determined to sell by framing them within this new context.

By focusing on the cultural sources of those fears and resentments, Bush appealed to many voters who don't necessarily share his (supposedly) deep-seated religious convictions, but who nevertheless feel more comfortable with him as a leader, especially in troubled times like ours. The perceived strength of Bush's convictions on "moral issues" make him seem more "authentic" than Kerry, more "real," more "American" to these voters, whose passions are rooted in the resentment of a largely mythic "elite" residing in coastal, "Blue America."

This authenticity creates a halo effect: Bush's strong and consistent convictions on religious and cultural issues inspire confidence in his management of economic and foreign policy issues (what some liberals like to call "real issues"). That's why so many Americans voted for Bush even though they understand that Iraq is a mess that the economy is in bad shape, that their healthcare costs are rising, and that Osama bin Laden and his terrorist network are still a threat. They might have doubts about Bush's record and his policies, but there's little doubt in their minds about his authenticity.

It's a strange, perhaps distinctly American phenomenon that a man like Bush can connect with what might be called "authenticity voters" when, in reality, he is both far closer to the despised elite than they ever will be, and also more conservative in his religious beliefs than many of them are. Columnist Eric Alterman, among others, thinks it has everything to do with communication. "He speaks their language," writes Alterman. "Our guys don't. And unless they learn it, we will continue to condemn this country and those parts of the world it affects to a regime of malignant neglect at best—malignant and malicious assault at worse."

New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof agrees, and adds that Democrats must learn how to talk about religion. "Don't be afraid of religion," he advises. "And argue theology with Republicans: there's much more biblical ammunition to support liberals than conservatives."

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The last thing we need is a Luntzian rebranding of Democratic policies and progressive ideas so that they seem to have a basis in religious values. Don't like "a woman's right to choose?" How about "a woman's freedom to make a moral decision?" Don't like "environmental regulation?" How about "our duty to protect God's green Earth?" A strategy that attempts to attract voters through linguistic re-packaging will only widen the authenticity gap. Americans—yes, even bible-toting, heartland-inhabiting, Bush-voting Americans—are savvy to the impact of consumer research on the words they hear and the images they see. Half-assed attempts to retrofit secularist progressive

ideas with Judeo-Christian religious imprimatur would be seen for what they would be—insincere—and would do more harm than good.

But there is one page from the conservative handbook that Democrats and liberals should steal. Just as conservatives have done, liberals need to demonstrate unshakable convictions on a certain core set of issues, articles of a secular belief system that map a coherent and consistent liberal worldview: universal healthcare, progressive taxation, reproductive rights, tolerance, multilateralism, environmental protection. The hope—and I must admit that at this dark hour, it is no more than a hope—is that by sticking to our godless guns, we will get our own halo effect.

We're never going to get the evangelical Christian vote. But we don't need it. We need the authenticity vote, and there's only one way to get it by actually being authentic, and by using our authenticity on core economic, social policy, and foreign policy issues to persuade voters that we can also be trusted to manage cultural and religious matters. It will take time, but this new culture war over authenticity—which is really a political culture war—can be won.

Justin Vogt can be reached at [cicada@nyu.edu](mailto:cicada@nyu.edu)

## Where Art Thou, Turd Blossom?

All the President's Nicknames

**T**hose of us who have worked closely with the president know how fond he is of giving nicknames to his friends and associates. Some say this is a sign of his warm and informal nature, the boyish simplicity of his populist heart. More critical observers suggest that the president is a bully who renames his associates as a means of demeaning and controlling them. Still others have advanced the theory that he simply isn't good with names, which we find to be the most plausible explanation. In any case, here is a list of some aliases Bush has assigned to pledges in the trillion-dollar fraternity house known to you as the federal government. Memorize them before the next cabinet meeting and let your fellow aides know who's the true insider.

POPPY	George H.W. Bush, 41st president, father
BUSHIE	Laura Bush, First Lady, wife
KENNY BOY	Kenneth Lay, former CEO of Enron, friend & supporter
BOY GENIUS	Karl Rove, senior advisor
TURD BLOSSOM	Karl Rove, senior advisor, following reports of favoritism
PABLO	Paul O'Neill, former secretary of the Treasury, also BIG O
HIGH PROPHET	Karen Hughes, special advisor, also HURRICANE KAREN
BIG COUNTRY	Joe Allbaugh, director of Federal Emergency Management Agency
TREE MAN	Unknown forest service official
PABLO	Paul Wellstone, former U.S. Senator
POOTIE-POOT	Vlad

## All Aboard the Mayflower

BY MARK LOTTO

**A**bout whatever happens next, I haven't a clue. I can't tell you if abortion will be outlawed, Iran invaded, or the hem of skirts legally lengthened. I don't know if the President's reelection will do to the Democrats what a certain asteroid did to the dinosaurs, and I don't know if I should double-check where I put my passport.

Some part of me, frankly, will be a little relieved if Bush decimates Social Security and most of Syria. It wouldn't, after all, leave him a ton of time to rewrite the Bill of Rights to look more like Leviticus. But then again, the morning after the election, Bill Bennett wrote, "Now is the time to begin our long, national cultural renewal" ("The Great Relearning")—no less in legislation than in federal court appointments. It is, after all, the main reason George W. Bush was reelected. Which is to say: nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition. Or rather: we're fucked.

But it's almost Thanksgiving. The calendar proceeds dutifully toward winter and the war in Iraq, called off and rescheduled on account of the President's reelection bid, will get ugly again along with the weather. With the TV blaring, I wonder why the people of Wyoming, Ohio, and Tennessee feel they are so endangered by terrorists and Iraqis that they will use New Yorkers like bank robbers use hostages, as human shields. I wonder when Democrats will start being more than the always-failing caretakers of Roosevelt and Kennedy. Mostly though, I sit and watch the last leaves falling off the trees and our neighbor's farm emerge sketchily from behind the thin ribbon of woods; I devise detailed lists of all the pies I'll eat a few Thursdays from now. I don't sleep that well.

This seems like an ideal moment to mention that President Bush and I share a direct but very distant ancestor: one John Howland, an honest-to-God, boots-and-buckles, as-

Red-Colony-as-they-came English, then American, Puritan. Howland, it seems, was a bit of a fuck-up, and a bumbler; and history books usually footnote him, if they do at all, for having fallen off the Mayflower. It'd be impossible for me to be fully objective on the topic of his rescue, but I won't fault anyone who wishes Howland had been left in the Atlantic.

Anyway, they threw him a rope and he was saved. And then he survived those first horrible winters on this new continent, nearly-missed, which would have been enough to convince anybody they were elect among the elect. George W. Bush, also a fuck-up, also a bumbler, but on a far bigger scale, has won two elections—something plenty of people have done with far less trouble—and it's convinced him he sits only slightly to the right of You Know Who. Forget the President's mandate: I'm freaked out about the covenant our elected Elect just made with *Passion of the Christ* fans to remake America into what they thought it was always supposed to be. It's a new Mayflower Compact.

It's still a mystery what will happen to the rest of us. This Thanksgiving, at least, we'll be stuck at the kiddie table, jostling elbows. It's not so bad. We're fifty-six million, plus ghosts. And though the phantom visitations will peak around grace, they'll pick up again in time for dessert. Ben Franklin, still staticky, will show us how to be struck by lightning and live; pale funny sherry-eyed Emily Dickinson will trace with her index finger the shotgun hole in Malcolm X's chest, and then whisper something. She will speak just loud enough for it to register, if not necessarily to be heard.

We learn in the retreating. ~

Mark Lotto has been published in the Nation and the New York Observer, and is contributing editor at THE INDEPENDENT.



31st and Wharton streets, October 2004. Photograph by Zoe Strauss.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Submit writing on this newspaper generally, or anything herein, or anything elsewhere. Send your letter for publication to letters@philadelphiaindependent.net or THE PHILADELPHIA INDEPENDENT, Bureau of Letters, 1026 Arch Street, Philadelphia, Penna 19107.

**COULDN'T BEAR TO WATCH**  
DEAR EDITORS:

Wednesday morning I awoke to go off to work, hoping for good news, having fallen asleep before knowing any official ruling. I hadn't watched because of my own paranoia. You see, anytime I have ever watched anything, sporting event or otherwise, and chosen a side, they always lose. Yes, sports fans, it's all my fault.

So Wednesday morning I had hope, and within fifteen minutes I found it smashed by newspaper headlines. Then, like a snake handler speaking in tongues, I just started shouting: Fuck! Motherfuck, what the, are you kidding? I didn't watch—why—why—son of a—Jesus—why—ignorant redneck fucks—goddamnit—motherfucking, cocksucking, Fox news-watching fucks! Jesus Christ! Why goddamnit, why? Do you just not know or just not care? Christ. How do you sleep? Aw, fuck it! No! Fuck it, people are fucked, fuck! Why—fuck!

Then, looking at the red and blue map and finding my home state red, I called my Grammma, because she was the only family member I was positive would be up and home. I also knew how she voted, because we had talked about it. Already knowing her answer, I asked anyway: Why?

Her answer: "He's a strong leader and he's best for America."

To which I replied: "But he's a monkey fucking idiot!"

Then I apologized for swearing, told her I loved her, and hung up. Finally I looked up to the sky, asked why, then proclaimed my home state of Indiana, which I love, mind you, dead to me.

JAKE HENRY  
Philadelphia

**OUR LAST HOPE?**

DEAR EDITORS:

On November 3, my ninth-grade social studies class was asked to respond to the outcome of the election. This is what I wrote:

I think I'm going to be sick. I told myself that if Bush won, the next day I would feel lost. But when I woke up today I felt no hope, and I was afraid to turn on the television.

I have many reasons. But so do Bush supporters. But I don't base my beliefs on what my mother thinks.

Stem cell research. Stem cell research is what they are studying to find a cure for diabetes. I have diabetes.

Health care. For those Americans like myself who spend thousands of dollars that we can't afford on meds and supplies. For the fact that insurance companies denied me because I am a diabetic.

I am 100 percent pro-choice. I know that if you are stupid enough to get knocked up, that

you should have to deal with it. But you have the right to choose. And if you take away that right, women will have to resort to throwing themselves down stairs and using coat hangers. And teenage lives will be ruined over one small mistake.

Gays should be allowed to get married[...]

I don't want my country to be run by (excuse my bluntness) a close-minded, ignorant, cowboy jackass. It's his fault that people look at Muslims—that people look at my family—like they are our enemies. People of America see Arabs and they think: terrorist. I know, first hand, that that's not even close to being true. And now my family is in danger because of this war that was never meant to happen.

I wish Kerry wouldn't give up. He's our last hope. I just wish I could do something instead of sitting around and watching our country go to hell.

JESS ALDEIGHI  
Rosemont, Pa.

**IT TAKES A NATION OF MILLIONS**

DEAR EDITORS:

When the U.S. attacked Iraq on March 20, 2003, I thought: what we're witnessing is not the fall of Iraq, but of America... This country has often been hypocritical, but never so shameless. The tower was coming down. And yet, on November 2, 2004, I went to the poll at seven in the morning filled with optimism: things will be different tomorrow. It is interesting to note that Bush was most favored by white men, least popular among blacks, who voted against him ten to one. Forced to bear the brunt of every bad national policy, blacks knew an evil president when they saw one. If only more of us had their insight that day.

LINH DINH  
Philadelphia

**NEWS FROM OHIO & A PRAYER**

DEAR EDITORS:

On November 3, my ninth-grade social studies class was asked to respond to the outcome of the election. This is what I wrote:

I am not satisfied in the least with the outcome of the election. I've been a part of one of the largest movements of civic responsibility that has happened in this nation, still I'm not satisfied.

Kerry's premature concession speech may have restored belief in our electoral process, but it robbed me of a significant avenue to protest Bush's reelection. There are still voting issues to be raised, especially in the election-determining state of Ohio. On election day I spoke with a friend in Columbus. He explained to me that his district was only given two voting booths, as opposed to the district next him, which had five; he waited two hours to vote while the average wait in the two surrounding (and richer) districts were mere minutes. He also explained to me how his district's waiting

period may have discouraged some voters who needed to get to work. I wasn't too surprised by that story, but I was surprised when he told me that voters wearing Vote or Die T-shirts were turned away. This pissed me off because there was no active news coverage of what was going on in the swing states—coverage that was much needed this year.

While some of us voted with our hearts, many of us voted with our minds on the future. As for the reds, most of them voted with their hearts. I'm not sure what to think of all this. All I know is that history doesn't tell us much except that lies are meant to fail us and hearts are meant to touch. On that note, I pray that God blesses our hearts and doesn't let the future of this nation fail by the lies that dictate it.

HANIF O'NEIL  
Philadelphia

**ON THE ENERGY CRISIS**

DEAR EDITORS:

Reducing pollution, an energy plan that looked to renewable resources, wilderness protection and improved fuel economy standards. These were the causes that John Kerry had fought for in the Senate and would have continued to promote as president. Environmental protection and regulation would have improved our nation's health and boosted our economy.

But instead of feeling helpless and waiting another four years for change, I want to reach out to others and encourage them to make a change in their daily choices. There are options for all Americans at local levels, like using clean energy, reducing our waste stream, and supporting sustainable businesses. Campaigning for Kerry made me realize how important it is to educate and mobilize Americans. Civil democracy can make a difference in our community and together we can create a sustainable model for the rest of the nation.

The day after the election, I started a website called [www.sustainPA.org](http://www.sustainPA.org). I want to build this site into a resource of sustainable practices for local residents that can eventually be exported to the rest of the nation. A new energy revolution and a reassessment of our impact on the environment will be necessary to offset the damage that will continue under President Bush. Please visit [www.sustainPA.org](http://www.sustainPA.org) or contact me directly at [aryon@sustainpa.org](mailto:aryon@sustainpa.org).

ARYON HOSEL  
Philadelphia

**HIS FATHER'S SON**

DEAR AMERICA:

Thanks a lot, you ignorant redneck motherfucks. I hope you're waking up today, feeling proud, breathing deep, and congratulating yourselves. You should know that the rest of us don't feel like we're part of your country anymore, but I guess good luck with the new cru-

## ESSAY

## Life in a Broken Nation

Stop Fighting For Your Country & Start Fighting Against It

from AMERICA page 1

into their marvelous political equation. The democracy they built was designed to *destroy itself*, and this week it has accomplished just that.

A free man, as the philosophers of the eighteenth century perceived him, could do and say what he pleases, so long as he does not adversely affect his neighbors; a free man may look and think as he likes, so long as he does not cause physical harm to his surroundings. But the American people have had enough of this freedom—and so they have granted it into the hands of Mr. Bush's cabal. Indeed, Mr. Bush is compelled to realize his agenda in the name of 'freedom'; and yet Mr. bin Laden is compelled by the same thing. Each want their people to be free and unharassed, and each is prepared to scour the earth and enslave our own native dissenters to accomplish it. Such freedom is dubious at best, where it comes at the cost of another's.

George W. Bush is the embodiment of the end of just rule by the people. This is not to say that he was not justly elected—regardless of the means of his ascendance, he represents the last figure to be *freely chosen* by the American electorate, because under his continued administration, we shall cease to be free as the framers defined it. This is because Mr. Bush's handlers and political philosophers believe they know better than the people—as surely as I do. And yet where I know better from the privacy of my den or the quietude of my tower, and harmlessly make my announcements in ink and pencil, the Republican demagogues are determined to exercise their superiority by legislating the behavior of the citizenry. They shall determine what is legal and illegal to say and do; they shall legislate how we are able to take care of ourselves physically and economically; they shall determine where we live and how we die, by pulling the strings of money and manipulating the very material of the natural world. They will do this because the population is stupid, and in their stupidity, the population desires it, and registered this desire, by a great effort of their overweight and overtired persons, in the boobytrapped funhouses that our polling places have been allowed to become. The population, in a democratic fashion, has chosen to demolish the "democratic republic." Jefferson would have had it just the same way—it is the genius of the democratic model after all—though perhaps he would have been more proud to see it last a bit longer. Still, he knew that when an electorate becomes too ill-informed and too weakly-equipped to uphold its duty to itself, it shall earn it and shall receive the government it wants, and the relevance of his constitution would quietly dissolve.

I guess the only conclusion we can draw from this is that you are stupid, scared, and mean. Was it September 11 that did this? You're so worried about your own asses, and so hellbent for revenge, that killing 100,000 people, even when their country had nothing to do with it, is acceptable? I feel like I'm going to throw up. The last four years have been like a bad dream, so what does that make the next four? Look out Syria and Iran, because you're next.

The poor people of Iraq. You seem so surprised that they "resist us," America. You say, "Why do they hate us?" Gee. Could it be because you are bombing and killing them? Could it be because you break into their houses, kidnap them, and torture them? I'm a little skeptical of the higher ground you're perched on, America. I suppose if people dropped "the mother of all bombs" on your grandmother's house, and roamed the streets in tanks, you'd greet them by waving the flags of their country. Jesus Christ.

Maybe now that your man George doesn't have to worry about being reelected, he'll drop the whole cowboy routine. Won't you be shocked when you find out that he's really not the kind of guy you want to barbecue with! Wait... he's not a cowboy? Wait... he's an elitist asshole millionaire frat boy born with a silver spoon up his ass? No, you're right, sorry, didn't want to spoil your illusion. He's just a good old boy, and he has no business ties with the Saudi royal family whatsoever. That would be a little questionable, wouldn't it? You should ask him about that, but he won't answer, because he's with Kenny Lay, and they're too busy jerking off into their money.

Well America, you've probably noticed it didn't take very long for my depression to turn into anger. Yeah, it has, and fuck you. You've probably noticed that the people who actually live anywhere near what could actually be considered a terror target didn't vote for George. What do they know that you don't? Well, you're the ones that should be afraid, because you're probably right. *They're coming for you.* They're going to bomb the Wal-Mart down the street from you, they're going to behead all the young white grade school teachers in Bumfuck, U.S.A...

Maybe you're right. Wouldn't that be a kick? When the locusts come, and the three-foot wave of blood washes over Jerusalem, thank God we'll all be on the same side as George. And by George, of course, I mean Jesus, the Son of God.

Your in anticipation of the rapture,  
Sincerely,

DIRK WOOD, Portland, Oregon  
[dirkwood@darkhorse.com](mailto:dirkwood@darkhorse.com)

P.S. I'm not mad at you, Dad. At least we live in the same state, so I cancelled out your vote.

Perhaps we have come to the apogee of human enlightenment in the superstitious reign of Junior Bush; or perhaps we are doomed to go further. Regardless, we ought to look and realize that the change we seek is one that will only come over the course of generations, of centuries, through the birth and death of nations and the rise and fall of great ideas. In the near term we shall lose our liberty, we shall be robbed of our human rights, and we shall see our nation turned into a kingdom of misguided divinity. We have little choice, as individuals, but to stop fighting for it, and begin fighting against it.

A free man, as the philosophers of the eighteenth century perceived him, could do and say what he pleases, so long as he does not adversely affect his neighbors; a free man may look and think as he likes, so long as he does not cause physical harm to his surroundings. But the American people have had enough of this freedom—and so they have granted it into the hands of Mr. Bush's cabal. Indeed, Mr. Bush is compelled to realize his agenda in the name of 'freedom'; and yet Mr. bin Laden is compelled by the same thing. Each want their people to be free and unharassed, and each is prepared to scour the earth and enslave our own native dissenters to accomplish it. Such freedom is dubious at best, where it comes at the cost of another's.

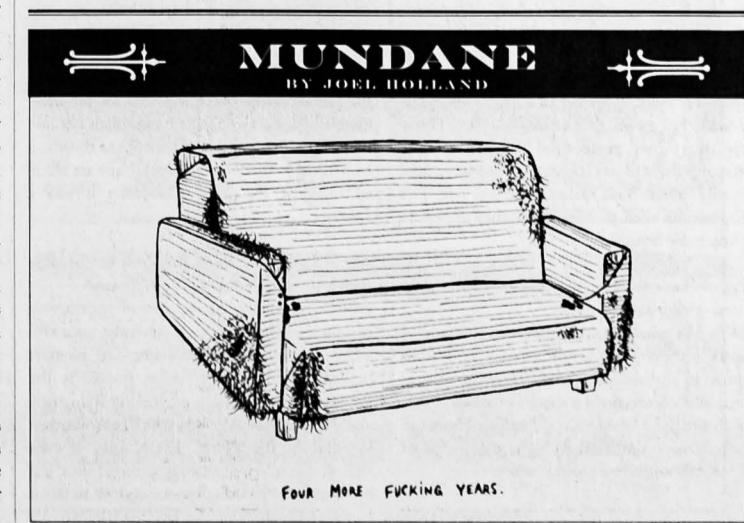
George W. Bush is the embodiment of the end of just rule by the people. This is not to say that he was not justly elected—regardless of the means of his ascendance, he represents the last figure to be *freely chosen* by the American electorate, because under his continued administration, we shall cease to be free as the framers defined it. This is because Mr. Bush's handlers and political philosophers believe they know better than the people—as surely as I do. And yet where I know better from the privacy of my den or the quietude of my tower, and harmlessly make my announcements in ink and pencil, the Republican demagogues are determined to exercise their superiority by legislating the behavior of the citizenry. They shall determine what is legal and illegal to say and do; they shall legislate how we are able to take care of ourselves physically and economically; they shall determine where we live and how we die, by pulling the strings of money and manipulating the very material of the natural world. They will do this because the population is stupid, and in their stupidity, the population desires it, and registered this desire, by a great effort of their overweight and overtired persons, in the boobytrapped funhouses that our polling places have been allowed to become. The population, in a democratic fashion, has chosen to demolish the "democratic republic." Jefferson would have had it just the same way—it is the genius of the democratic model after all—though perhaps he would have been more proud to see it last a bit longer. Still, he knew that when an electorate becomes too ill-informed and too weakly-equipped to uphold its duty to itself, it shall earn it and shall receive the government it wants, and the relevance of his constitution would quietly dissolve.

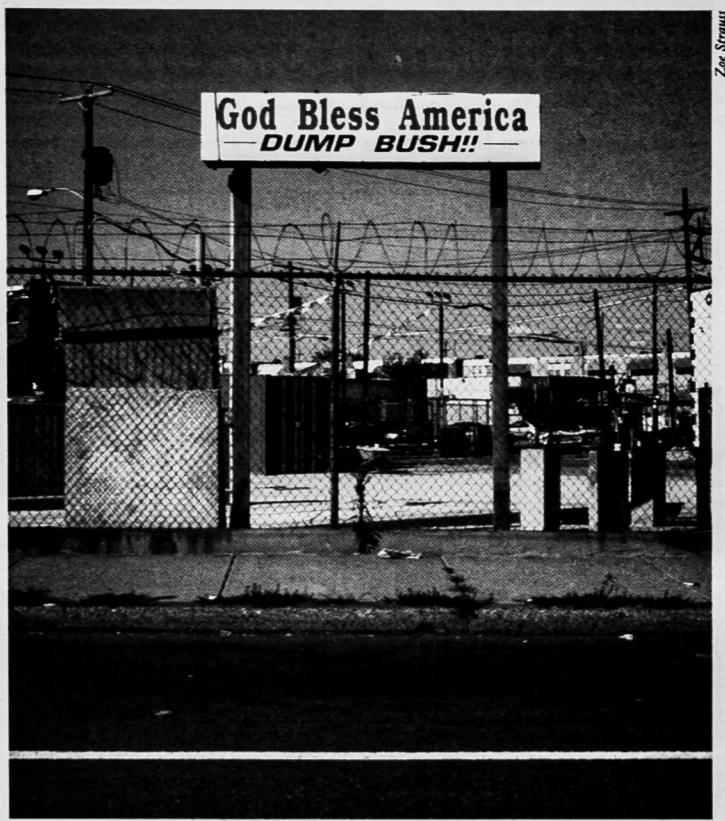
Our pride or our optimism or our slumbering reason has until now prevented us from realizing that we reside in an utterly dark age and in the land from which that darkness emanates. Science and reason and sense are nearly vanished from our society, and the great majority desire to be ruled by fear of the supernatural, ignorance, intolerance, and blindness.

The majority of our countrymen are content to wage war for its own sake, they are content to annihilate populations unlike their own, they are content to be relieved of the responsibility for being human. They are content to lean back and let a mysterious, wrathful God govern their fate, and to dictate what is right and wrong. They are content, in short, to give away their liberty and become slaves of idiotic ideology, and in so doing to abandon the legacy of their country's founders. The United States is only the same nation it was in name; but it is not that country of hope and opportunity and possibility and absolute human freedom anymore.

And it has not been this for some time—the great gift Mr. Bush might have given to us in his victory is a clear, long overdue picture of our country as the unlikely enemy of true human freedom. The last thing our democracy was ever meant to do was bring the hammer down upon itself. There the shards of our enlightened society will lay until enough members of an enlightened generation can be summoned to rebuild it. Until then, those of us who know better have nothing to do but to fight that shadowy thing that now stands in our old place.

Alexander Swartzwout edited Three Weeks, a newspaper in Queens, New York.





## NATIONAL REPORT

# UP CLOSE & INVISIBLE

*The United States Government is a Hard One to Know*

BY PAUL MALISZEWSKI

I moved to Washington, D.C., a little over a year ago. I work as a teacher and a sometime-ghostwriter. I had thought, before living here, that I would feel near to power, and that being in its proximity, I would naturally come to understand it better. I had thought I'd work as a dogged freelancer. I fancied that I'd devote countless enjoyable hours to digging up forgotten or overlooked government documents, discovering the truth in the National Archives and the Library of Congress, there all along, in the public domain.

I spent my optimism, such as it was, within the first few weeks. The proximity, which I'd construed as an opportunity to write was in fact only daunting, a reason to read more before even thinking about writing. Proximity produced complexity—maddening complexity—and I struggled even for an analogy capacious enough to convey what I observed. Was government the old elephant attended to by blind men—they were journalists in my analogy—who mistook its tail, its skin, its feet, and its trunk for different creatures, drawing divergent conclusions based on their limited experience? In part, it was, I guessed.

But government was like a mural, too, which told a sprawling tale with many threads and thousands of characters. Each thread was compelling and full of life, each a story in itself, but no thread could even begin to reflect the whole, let alone capture any of the complexity. Metonymy was but a cruel joke, easy enough to contrive and so alluring, but never that accurate. And yet to tell the whole story, to address the mural in its entirety, was to wallow in generality, broad strokes, statistics.

And meanwhile, wasn't government also something like Kafka's parable of the law, which he described as an endless series of gates and gatekeepers? Approaching one gate and gaining passage gave one a vertiginous feeling of being inside, having access, and yet there was—and would always be—another inside, a place of greater inside-ness, before which stands an even larger guard, a more imposing, better armed gatekeeper, who will not permit entry to just anyone.

For several weeks, I struggled with the problem of an analogy, modifying the old elephant into, at one low moment, a massive translucent blob, weighing thousands of tons and filled with jelly that had this ability, a power, I guess, to mimic other animals. Next, I made my mural a painting with nested levels of figures and details, in which an individual brushstroke was as intriguing and worthy of consideration as its overall composition. I struggled with these analogies, I say, playing with them, until I recognized, finally, that it was just play, a game of pulling clever comparisons from the air. The game itself was an analogy for something else. I had the sense that I was merely dancing with shadows in order to avoid having to face squarely the fire behind me all along. That was another analogy, one just as bad and no more exact. Perhaps writing articles about the government was as futile as tossing about the government was as futile as tossing

finely crafted teapots into an approaching hurricane. I still tried it, of course. I still wrote. I made my teapots, and I painted them prettily, but I was increasingly frustrated by their lack of effect. The teapots ended up either crushed, laying in pieces at my feet, or else they ended up ignored, resting in glass vitrines inside a museum no one cared to attend.

Once, on a Sunday afternoon, at a restaurant in my neighborhood, I overheard a man telling two women he was having brunch with all about the government. The man was in his twenties, out of college but just barely, and I remember he said, "I have several qualms about the current federal tax code..." He went on to enumerate those qualms—as I recall, there were three or four—and the women nodded along and listened.

Another time, on the Metro, I overheard an old man talking to his friend. I got on the train at the Foggy Bottom stop and was heading home from teaching. The men boarded later, at Metro Center. Said the old man, "I have to say that I took great umbrage with..." I lost the line of argument there, so caught up was I in hearing the word "umbrage" used in conversation.

My girlfriend has discussed the war in Iraq with a contractor who's doing some work on our kitchen. And she has held forth with the local pharmacist and the cashier, who were both interested to hear her thoughts on why Senator John Edwards failed to carry for the Democrats North Carolina, his home state, and South Carolina, where he was born. She was wearing a Duke University sweatshirt at the time, so they suspected she had reason to know. Together the three of them reconsidered Senator John Kerry's choice of vice presidential candidates, but after some deliberation could come up with none better than Edwards. "Lieberman," the cashier pointed out, "might as well be a Republican."

I have, I am afraid, nothing original to write with regard to what happened during the most recent presidential election and what went wrong and now what the future four years will bring. I can improvise expertise, dilating with seeming knowledge about national population demographics moving to the geographic south and the ideological right. I, too, have qualms, after all. And I, too, can take umbrage. I can, for example, suppose almost endlessly about the seeming hopelessness of matching a senator up against a former governor. The governor will almost always win—it's like paper covering rock—because the senator has a clear record of national achievements and failures, while the governor has only managerial know-how to advertise and a blank slate, his beliefs made to order, tailored to suit the new occasion. And I can bemoan the sad state of a country in which a life led in public may appear as a liability, requiring endless justifications and mincing explanations, pained apologies offered for service, whereas the life led in private, for personal gain, earns only envy and admiration. The millions served bow to the millions earned.

## Building Blocs One Home at a Time

BY CHRIS WHITE

How do you get millions of people to do something at the same time? Those who are able to do so control the world. They might use money or arms or threats, but in the end we all eat and sleep and live because a series of tasks are performed each day by a series of people. This is based not on reason or morality, but the relationships we have with each other.

As a union organizer, my job is to visit a certain segment of people in their homes and convince them to reorganize their relationships for their mutual benefit. Visiting someone at home and having a one on one conversation with him or her continues to be the most effective form of communication. You can contact large numbers of people through the media or the Internet or by leafleting, but you're only going to pick up a handful of the people you're sending it to. When the speed of communication increases, the quality of communication always decreases. I'm dismayed and embarrassed that I have messed around with activism for a decade and have only begun to do housevisits in the last few years.

The ideal housevisit lasts about twenty minutes to half an hour. In that time, the effective visitor spends about eighty percent of the time listening and twenty percent of

the time talking. The talking I do in a housevisit is divided between asking questions and agitating. Asking questions forces the visited to finish their thoughts and fill in all the details. Agitation is getting people to feel their anger and take a step towards doing something about it. The visitor asks questions about the person's entire life in order to be able to connect what the visited person cares about to what I'm agitating the visited person to do.

For example, you visit someone at home. They tell you it's hard for them to get to the polls, because they can't afford treatment for their diabetes and it makes it hard for them to walk. You get them to connect to their anger over their lack of healthcare. Their anger motivates them to vote. You drive him to the polls.

Put down this paper right now. Walk outside and begin having one on one conversations with everyone on your block. What's their self-interest? What do they want out of your neighborhood? Your town? Your country? If they voted for somebody, what did they want that candidate to do? Do they still want it done? What are they ready to do to make it happen?

Chris White has written for *Cometbus* and *The Defenestrator*.

## OPINION

### AGAINST OHIO

*Blind Buckeye State Makes a New Yorker See Red*

BY DAVID HASKELL

Fuck Ohio. Fuck the 2.8 million citizens who made that state red, and fuck everyone who couldn't summon the effort to vote, 136,483 of whom could have sent George W. Bush back to Texas. As for everyone in Ohio who voted for John Kerry, thank you from the bottom of my heart. But if you look deep within and discover that you didn't do enough to persuade your office colleagues, college buddies and church congregations to vote, then fuck you, too.

Some say that moral values mattered more in this election than jobs, healthcare, the war in Iraq and our response to the threat of terrorism. As a gay 25 year-old who lives in New York City and believes himself to be a man of good morals, I find myself wondering for the first time if I'm an American. I look at the two men who ran for president and the campaigns they spearheaded, and I can't help but find that one of them represents a country that bears no resemblance to the America I know.

Obsessed with winning the War on Terror, George W. Bush has proven well adept at making his America terrified. Terrified that Hollywood movies exert more influence on our children than Sunday services. Terrified that the institution of marriage will crumble in the face of committed homosexuals. Terrified that reaching out to our allies will be perceived as a sign of weakness. Terrified that the "elite media"

will brainwash us into becoming an honorary member of the European Union. Terror motivated the votes of more Ohioans than self-interest, and as a result, a state where job figures dropped, healthcare costs rose and the number of uninsured citizens skyrocketed has opted for more of the same. Red America is on Red Alert.

Well, Ohio, I give up. Here in the capitol of Blue America, I'm going to be just fine. I have no student loans, and in four years, I bet I'll be taking advantage of the newest round of Bush tax cuts. I'm not worried about health insurance because I already have mine. I have no need for prescription drugs from Canada because I'm not sick. My job won't be outsourced because I was trained well enough to compete in a global economy. I'm not fighting in Iraq because even if I wanted to, the Army wouldn't let me. I barely notice gasoline prices because I don't own a car. And over the next four years, as the deficit, interest rates, prescription drug costs, unemployment rolls, gas prices and death tolls rise, my boyfriend and I will remain relatively unaffected, content to watch characters come out on prime time television. Red Alert America may have won another four years in the White House, but they remain terrified. How long will it be until the OC's Seth puts the moves on Ryan?

David Haskell is editor-in-chief of Topic magazine. He can be contacted at [David.Haskell@topicmag.com](mailto:David.Haskell@topicmag.com).

### Organizing in Swing States

from INTERVIEWS page 1  
tinct and opposing on the war, the outsourcing of jobs, stem cell research, and exit plans out of Iraq. There were clear issues and people were motivated to take sides and vote.

AC: Bush won a significant chunk of votes from minorities and young people, groups who have traditionally voted with the Democrats; any thoughts on why?  
WR: On all sides, fear motivated people to vote. Some young people I talked to were petrified of the draft, petrified that there will no jobs and so they voted for Kerry. Fear of terrorism though, brought out other people to vote for Bush. A huge number of people from war-torn places—a lot of Nicaraguans and Cubans—support him because he represents security. I think the Democrats could learn from W. about appealing to a base. Democrats need to bring back their traditional base. Thirty to thirty-five percent of Hispanics vote Republican and it's because of security and family values. Bush makes them feel safe. The Democrats need to revisit how they appeal to church communities.

AC: What's your biggest grip with the electoral system as it is now?  
WR: We need to get every vote to count. I work in the jails and I see that work needs to be done to institutionalize the electoral process within the corrections system, so that all people with the right to vote can get ballots in time to be counted. We need to fight the Board of Elections until they put the resources in.

Carol Belin directs the Jeannette Rankin Peace

movement. In the 1970s there was a bit of a renaissance but economically, as things declined, the interests of the people who were buying up the land became more conservative. Historically, self-reliance is progressive. Now it appears in the form of pushes for a Constitutional amendment to protect hunting and fishing. A candidate's position on guns can determine whether he wins or loses an election.

AC: How can we improve the electoral system?  
CB: We should do away with the electoral college and move away from a system where the winner takes all. On a federal level, there is no representation for half of the population. Proportional representation would be a better system.

This year, Field Director Kelley Weigel worked with Western State Center, a progressive leadership training organization, to get out the vote in Portland's low-income communities.

AC: Why do you think Kerry took Oregon?

Kelley Weigel: The economy was one reason. Another factor was the huge number of new voters, many of whom came from low-income communities. In Oregon, everyone votes by absentee ballot and advance registration isn't required, so we didn't have to deal with any provisional ballots. The mail system makes it easier for people, especially first time voters, to vote.

AC: How is it easier?

KW: It's less trouble for people without a car or access to a polling place. Also, people have three weeks between the time they receive the ballot and when it is due back to the Board of Elections so they have some time to figure out the ballot, call the BOE with questions, and fix any problems.

AC: Would you recommend that other states adopt the vote-by-mail process?

KW: Absolutely. And if they don't switch to the mail-system, all states could benefit from improving access to absentee ballots.

Molly Weiser, lawyer and executive director of the Racial Fairness Project, worked to improve voter registration and ballot access in Ohio jails. She is based in Cleveland.

Ariella Cohen: What's your next project now that the election is over?

Molly Weiser: I've recently realized that people in Ohio jails have a statutory right to have a ballot personally delivered to them, as opposed to receiving the ballot through the mail. My next step is to litigate the issue using that provisional code and argue that two representatives from the Board of Elections, one Democrat and one Republican, should come to the jail, like they come to other public places, and deliver ballots to the inmates. Unless someone wants to argue that the jail is not a public or private institution, people have a right to hand-delivered ballots.

AC: How many inmates did you and your volunteer staff register for this election?

MW: I don't have exact numbers but we did face-to-face voter registration and absentee ballot collection in ten jails and the corrections officers collected absentee ballots in twenty more.

AC: How did the corrections officers respond to the voter drive?

MW: People came to it from all kinds of positions. There are ninety-two jails in Ohio, some of them said, literally, "fuck you." Other people never returned our phone calls and about thirty permitted us to distribute the registration materials, or did it for us.

AC: If you could transform one step of the electoral process, which would you choose?

MW: I am a real opponent of prior-day registration. Same-day registration makes it so

much easier for people to exercise their right to vote. We need to make it as open and accessible a process as possible.

As director of United Vision for Idaho, Roger Sherman works to build a democratic, grassroots movement in Boise.

Ariella Cohen: What did you learn from this election?

Roger Sherman: What we saw is that the strongest grassroots campaigns won.

AC: Is that why Republicans consistently win Idaho?

RS: It's a big reason. Now we are working towards training progressive candidates to run really strong field operations, the way the Republicans have always done. In Idaho, the powerful grassroots actions come out of the church, but recently the Democrats have picked up senate seats using strong door-knocking grassroots campaigns.

AC: Can you give an example of how grassroots

campaigns work for Republicans in Idaho?

RS: The pro-life movement, which is a kind of quintessential popular movement in Idaho, took down a Democratic congressman named Alan Anderson in this election. The guy is a Mormon who happened to vote against one anti-choice measure. To call him pro-choice would be a stretch, but still, a vote was mobilized against him on the abortion issue.

AC: Was there any talk of fraud or voter disenfranchisement in Idaho?

RS: Our same-day registration policy eliminates a lot of those problems. Turnout is our big problem now. Six states in the nation have same-day registration and that's great, but we need to take more advantage of it. We need to make voting part of our year-round campaigns so that we don't have all this last minute hustling to get people to the polls. Voter activity has to be tied to other grassroots activities; it needs to be part of our everyday lives.

Ariella Cohen can be contacted at [ariellacohen@riseup.net](mailto:ariellacohen@riseup.net).

### On Voting From China

BY M.F. CAPPIELLO

SHANGHAI, China—Not wanting to receive my ballot too late, in September I sent my request to Indiana by priority mail (cost: \$4.83), which turned out to be wasted, because the state doesn't send out absentee ballots until the first of October. I could have used regular mail. But when my ballot hadn't arrived by mid-October, I downloaded an official write-in ballot from the Internet. I was unable to walk at the time so I couldn't go to the embassy to hand in the form, and I didn't own a fax machine. But with the help of my students, I mailed the form express (cost: \$6.00).

When all was said and done, exercising my democratic rights from my post abroad set me back \$33.35 or 276 Chinese renminbi, about the cost of two weeks rent at my old apartment.

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AC: Can you give an example of how grassroots

## From Our Readers

After the dispiriting result of this month's election, we were heartened that so many of you responded to our open call for submissions. Unfortunately, the amount of newsprint we had to work with prevented us from printing every submission we received. Here are excerpts from some of our favorite submissions that we weren't able to print in full:

**C**oming home, I passed a neighbor's window that yesterday had a Kerry sign in it. The sign had been turned around and in black marker were written the words, "Shame On You America."

—DITTA BARON HOEBER, Philadelphia

**Y**esterday, nearly one million of my fellow Oregonians agreed that my wife and I are second-class citizens undeserving of over 1,000 rights that heterosexual married couples take for granted. I can't even begin to express how I feel ... friends and family have tried to comfort me, kindness that brings me to tears. Knowing that they are trying to understand my pain and sadness helps. As does the fact that over 700,000 people voted against Measure 36. But it is still not enough to stop my tears.

—JESSICA MITCHELL, Portland, Ore.

**M**y mind wanders to the late great tap-dancer Gregory Hines in *The Cotton Club*, where he plays a simple nightclub entertainer faced with the chaos of gang warfare, feeling helpless to make an effective—read violent—impact. Eventually he concludes that it's not loser talk to say that he'll fight with his tap shoes. He'll dance like a fucking warlord. By hard work and grace we'll evolve. That's my new hope, because in that upwardly-mobile process, in spite of all obstacles and defeats, even unto death, you can only win. Excellence is the best revenge. I still believe that.

—CLARK ROTH, Philadelphia

**A**t noon on November 2, the dining room of the Famous Fourth Street Deli, a traditional Election Day lunch spot for politicians, was filled with power brokers lining up for bagels, lox and political kibitzing. Outside, a large tour bus was blasting hip-hop. Inside, Russell Simmons was talking up his Hip-Hop Action Summit, a nationwide get out the vote effort. "The hip-hop community is the best branding community in America," said Simmons. "When the hip-hop community chooses something, America chooses it. The hip-hop community chose voting, because young people want their voices heard. Look at the turnout so far today. America has chosen to vote." Everywhere I went, in the Barrio, in black neighborhoods, in Center City, in South Philly, the voters were out in droves. Anthony Ringgold, 21 and his friend, George Slaughter, 35, were in standing in line among seniors in wheel chairs at the Stephen Smith Home for the Aged on Belmont Avenue in West Philadelphia. Ringgold said he'd had enough of Bush. "He's fucked up," said Ringgold. "Time for a change." Slaughter agreed, adding that there is such urgency among young blacks "that even my little brother and his corner boys, you know, street pharmacists, are getting off the corner to vote." So much for high hopes.

—HOWARD ALTMAN, Philadelphia

**I** will never be okay with the events of the past thirty-six hours, but perhaps I am coming to a place where I don't have to blame myself and I don't have to feel entirely hopeless ... my plan is to try and make a little bit of progress every day, for the next four years, for however long it takes, until we break the shell of inhumanity and pervercity that's covered our country.

—MEG BUZZI, Columbus, Oh.

**I**accuse the leadership of the Democratic Party with negligence; with misrepresenting the ideals of the party; with malfeasance; of moral bankruptcy; of exchanging charisma for conviction; of a failure of imagination; of a deep suspicion of its constituency; of cynicism and apathy; of a willful estrangement from the working class; of betraying the party's legacy; and of complicity in the party's recent losses, all of which culminate in a violation of the party's legitimacy as our representatives in government. Our recent defeat warrants both considerable discussion of and quiet reflection on what it means to be a democrat in the United States of America today, and how it relates to the future of our party.

—J. TODD RAMSAY, Philadelphia

**W**hat the politicians want from us is not to "heal," but to "heal." Like subservient pets, we're supposed to be quiet, walk behind them, and continue to

obey their commands without question. I don't want to obey. I don't want to agree with this President's immoral war. I don't want to quietly accept the unnecessary deaths and maiming of our good young men and women and innocent Iraqi children. I don't want to be forced to stand in a "Free Speech Zone" to disagree—about anything. I want to protest wherever and however I can. It used to be a right under the First Amendment in the pre-Bush and Ashcroft era. I want to dissent even more fiercely and disagree more loudly than before. My voice still isn't being heard in Washington. I want my civil rights—I want your civil rights—returned.

—ROSEMARY R. BRASCH, Bloomsburg, Pa.

**I** have never felt such a feeling of dread. I woke up yesterday and immediately had a panic attack. I woke up this morning, and there it was again. I can't believe that the majority of Americans think George Bush is the better man.

—PATRICIA NIMS, Fort Mill, S.C.

**C**learly, the nation has spoken. Here's what they said: "We don't care about anyone but ourselves. More unemployment is fine with us. Diplomacy is no longer relevant to foreign policy. Health care is a privilege, not a right." Those opposed to this regime will wait patiently for a new light of leadership to break, but as our patience wears thin, we may be forced to light a fire under ourselves.

—JOSHUA H. NIMS, Philadelphia

**D**uring the campaign, Bush and Kerry both suffered from the political need to lie, but their lies were of a different type. Bush supporters wanted badly to see the truth in their candidate's lies—that Iraq was going well, that the tax cuts were working, and that his policies stood on moral principle. On the other hand, those who supported Kerry subsisted on a private reserve of confidence that their candidate was in fact lying. When Kerry said marriage was between a man and a woman, they trusted he didn't believe it. When speaking about how religious faith informed his goals in public policy, they hoped that time would prove otherwise. More to the point, Bush lied to promote an ideology he believed in, while Kerry lied to obfuscate an ideology he either lacked or was embarrassed by.

—GEORGE BALGOBIN, Philadelphia

**T**he absence of cosmopolitan, networked public intellectuals may actually contribute to the isolation of smaller, localized groups cut off from other ideas and influences. Interactive dialogue is key to any movement forward from where we are now. We cannot abandon cosmopolitanism for a new form of medievalism; we cannot disengage from the geopolitical level.

—PETER SCHWARZ, Philadelphia

**H**ey, Village Idiot and all your fellow theocrats and neocons, hear me now. We'll be back and we'll be stronger and better organized and even hungrier and madder and more focused and more disgusted and we will take this country back with all its marvelous potential and we will ultimately prevail.

—WENDY FORMAN

**I**am 26 years old, and by the time Bush is out of the White House I will be 30. I fear for what the world will look like then, and yet I feel it is my responsibility to continue to care about what happens in America and the rest of the world.

—SKYE PARROTT, Paris, France

**H**ow do voters make their decisions? Are they aware of how this administration lied and cheated and used fear to manipulate us? Are they aware of what lies ahead? As Shakespeare wrote, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings."

—JOHN OLIVER MASON

**I**am a mother. It's up to me to explain this to my kids. My 8-year-old stayed up all night watching the returns with her dad. She climbed into bed this morning to ask who won. I told her we didn't know but it looked like Bush and she was sad, she was angry. I'm going to teach her to use it.

—LAUREN EICHELBERGER, Baltimore, Md.

## DISPATCH

### BUSH 2000, KERRY 2004

#### The Story of My Conversion

BY JESSICA CLAIR

I voted for Bush in 2000. I'm not proud of it and it's been highly classified until now, but I'm learning that mistakes are okay and admitting them is good therapy. In 2000, I was 23 years old, married to a Dupont chemist, and living in a white, middle class Delaware suburb. My parents and religious-right circle of friends and family voted for Bush, too, because that's what Jesus would have done. By that time I wasn't so sure about Jesus anymore, but I pulled that lever with conviction, anyway.

A lot of things changed between my 2000 lever pull and 2004 button push. Like most of my friends, I had married early and never finished college. Suddenly in 2001, I found myself separated, working my way through college on a receptionist's salary. My boss kept me busy photocopying pictures of his boat and *Wall Street Journal* articles on the rich's unfair tax burden; he had inherited a large sum of money, but then had invested that money and made himself. As for me, I made a lot of hot dog ramen noodle stirfries.

But I got by. I looked for roommates to help with the rent and wound up with friends who taught me about lighting Hannukah candles, single parent families, and racial inequality.

And I learned things that Bob Jones University Press had somehow omitted from my high school textbooks. In those last years of school, I gained a sense of possibility that changed my goals in life.

While the rest of my class was walking at commencement, I was moving into a little apartment in a working class Philadelphia neighborhood. I found a job in Center City coordinating mental health services where each day, I read case notes about people with "work and life stress," people who live in fear of violence, who cope with substance abuse, who are depressed, anxious, and stretched to capacity. It got me thinking about life in cubicles, offices, and factories across the country. I thought about people showing up every day at jobs that barely support their families, struggling through without help, trapped.

Back in 2000, there were so many things that I didn't know I didn't know. I was sure that

what I had been taught as a child, that in the United States, anyone could achieve anything, was true. But now, after work, I take the subway to Cecil B. Moore station and attend graduate classes in social work. We talk about how that's not true, how anyone can't achieve anything,

and how it won't be true until we provide social justice and basic human rights, a living wage for each person and access to good education and health insurance. I can't escape from others anymore, whether they be the kids playing in the projects I pass near the train station, or the homeless man wearing trash bags that calls to me on my walk to work.

There has been a lot of talk about George Bush and isolationism. But there is another sense of isolation in the United States, one so broad and insidious that it blinds us to the needs of others and causes us, on our way to the top, to step on their backs. And then there is the isolation of flaunting our "self-made" accomplishments as a salve for loneliness and detachment. And the sense of isolation that is simply homogeneity, the presumption that what is best for ourselves and our circle is best for all people, everywhere.

I voted for Kerry in 2004. But the truth is that I don't think it was too much of a choice. The best candidate probably never had a chance to raise enough money, or join Skull and Bones. I wonder who Jesus would have voted for. Maybe he would have been too busy performing miracles and asking people to please not wear those silly WWJD bracelets to make it to the polls. Maybe we have all been fooled into thinking that one vote cast in one booth can set into motion the mechanics of a just government. Or maybe we have been lulled into complacency, content to pull a lever or push a button or check a box that transfers our responsibility for others away from ourselves and sends it to the halls of Washington, D.C. Some presidents are better stewards of our citizenship than others, but it looks like we can't count on that this time. For the next four years, we're all going to have to help each other out.

Jessica Clair can be contacted at [jxci@hotmail.com](mailto:jxci@hotmail.com)

## DISPATCH

### BLUE AS A BEAVER

#### Oregon Progressives Win a Few Local Battles

BY ZACH DUNDAS

**P**ORTLAND, Ore.—The light was failing over the city at the confluence of the Columbia and Willamette rivers, the city washed by monsoon-like northwestern rains throughout Election Day. I was riding in a white fifteen-passenger van in a working-class neighborhood called Roseway, home to a Safeway and many low-slung, sidewalk-less streets of ranch-style houses. In front were Katie Stern and Courtney Gould, two paid staffers for America Coming Together, trying to find some of the last fugitive voters in two heavily Democratic precincts.

In Oregon, everyone votes by mail, by either turning their ballot over to a (usually partisan) collection effort or by dropping their ballot off at a designated site. In the half hour I spent with them, Gould and Stern and the red-ponchoed volunteers under their care rounded up three ballots, one so battered it looked like it had nearly succumbed to the proverbial home-working dog. They arranged rides for three voters who, for various reasons, said they needed to go to the county elections office and pick up new ballots.

"It's awesome, because at this point, every vote they collect is one that wouldn't have been cast otherwise," Gould told me as I bounced around in the back seat. "Gore won by about one vote per precinct in 2000."

And while Gould and Stern both thought with retroactively heart-breaking certainty that they were helping make John Kerry the president, what they really doing was blazing a trail for whatever kind of broad progressive political movement might manage to pull itself together in the wake of Kerry's defeat.

Election Day in Portland, despite Oregon's odd voting format, looked like Election Day is supposed to. People thronged sites where ballots were collected, forming massive chains of sign-waving, celebratory partisanship. In a city that opposed the president with as much fervor as can be imagined north of Berkeley or west of Paris, turn out neared ninety percent. That was largely thanks to ACT-istas like Gould and Stern, and to the menagerie of other groups formed both to skirt campaign finance restrictions and to reinvigorate an electorate that seemed stuck in a quadrennial pattern of atro-

phy. ACT alone spent as much as \$5 million in Oregon, most of which was focused on Portland, a metropolitan motherlode of Blue votes in a state that would otherwise be a Red clone, another Montana or Idaho.

As we now know, the unprecedented national get out the vote efforts deployed on Kerry's behalf were outdone by Karl Rove's complementary efforts. But take away the rest of the country, for a moment, and look at Portland, and the larger (potential) significance of the energy expended in the effort to oust President Bush becomes clear.

Consider these not-unrelated developments:

- The massive, impassioned Portland electorate effectively delivered seven electoral votes to John Kerry.
- At the same time, the race in Oregon's First Congressional District, long seen as an opportunity for Republicans to pick up a seat on the strength of a highly touted, well-funded nominee, instead turned into a win for the Democratic incumbent. While the district stretches all the way to Oregon's coast, it includes Portland's most densely populated neighborhoods, home to many college students and young people.
- Oregon's Democratic Party took control of the state's Senate for the first time in a decade.
- A tightly contested city council race between two candidates nearly indistinguishable in their credentials tipped, at the last moment, to the younger, gayer, arguably more progressive candidate.
- A right-wing attempt to repeal a county income tax, which would have led to the gutting of local school budgets, failed.

For those who desperately wanted a John Kerry victory, all that looks like cold consolation. But with the Democratic Party faced with the necessity of rebuilding itself from the ground, the armies of volunteers, low-paid staffers and web-empowered partisans represent the only untrammeled source of energy available to it. So while Gould and Stern didn't turn the tide this time, they may represent the only hope for turning it in the future.

Zach Dundas writes for Willamette Week in Portland and edits [www.mumblog.com](http://www.mumblog.com).

## SOUND ADVICE

HIP HOP + POLITICS + REVOLUTION

### REVIEW

#### More Dead Than Alive

BY DERIK A. BADMAN

Lou Reed. *Metal Machine Music*. RCA: 1975. 25th Anniversary CD edition, Buddha Records (2000).

**T**he story goes (and for the sake of the metaphor, I'll go along with it) that Lou Reed set up two guitars and two amps and then let them feedback into each other. Thus we have *Metal Machine Music*: screeching, wailing, droning feedback (more than every Sonic Youth album put together). That's all. The great Lester Bangs, in his exaggerated way, proclaimed it "the greatest album ever made in the history of the human cardrum" and the "best medicine" for the "worst hangover ... to prepare you for what's in store for the rest of the day."

In its time, the double album consisted of four tracks, each on one side. Now the four tracks are on CD, each about sixteen minutes long, though sadly unable to reproduce the locked groove on the last track of the original album, which forced the listener to get up and turn it off.

Sixteen minutes of feedback, modulated to different frequencies, is not as repetitious as you might think. A lot of variation can be created from feedback, but you have to listen to *Metal Machine Music* on headphones, as I do

when walking around. Each ear is a completely different channel, competing with the other. Sometimes the left side comes to the fore, sometimes the right. Sometimes they both blast away at once: dueling "voices." Sometimes the high wail sounds like a baby screaming, or maybe an engine, a motor, a plane, a bird.

At first it is completely obnoxious, disturbing, an assault on your ears, on your conscious surroundings (the noise gives everything a sharp edge), but the longer it goes on, the more you become accustomed to the assault. It fades into the background; you start thinking over the noise. And then the silence: the tracks don't stop as just cut off, abruptly. Blessed silence. After that noise, the silence is an enlightenment, a presence in the absence, palpable. For a few seconds things are clear ... until the next track starts.

Language eventually fails us. The point comes where sense is lost, where meaning can no longer be conveyed with words, where expression is impossible. *Metal Machine Music* has no words.

I've been listening to it a lot since Tuesday.

More of Derik A. Badman's writing can be found online at [www.madinkbeard.com](http://www.madinkbeard.com)

### RECIPE

#### Post Election Mix Tape

BY J. GABRIEL BOYLAN

##### SIDE A

###### THE CLASH

###### Know Your Rights

In fact, just listen to *Combat Rock* in its entirety, and repeat as often as necessary, praying at the same time that you won't ever need reminding of your rights.

###### TALKING HEADS

###### Life During Wartime

Art school? Yes. Cleaner-cut than the Ramones? Sure. Not really punk? Fuck you!

###### STIFF LITTLE FINGERS

###### Suspect Device

Listen to this song as you read the steady stream of articles that has already begun regarding the malfunctioning of voting machines, the institutional intimidation of voters, and the official blind eye cast on hundreds of thousands of votes in Ohio and Florida.

###### AT THE DRIVE-IN

###### One Armed Scissor

I realize this band is kind of lame, but they still wrote one of the best songs of the past ten years. "Is this the comfort

## The Bush Doctrine

BY PENELOPE BLACKWELL

To people who value international law, George W. Bush's National Security Strategy—the so-called Bush Doctrine—was widely seen as an aberration, the sick fantasy of a soon-to-be-deposed cowboy who never had a mandate in the first place. Only a few days ago, the absurdity of his doctrine and his record of failures both in the United States and abroad were so overwhelming that it seemed impossible that more than half of the American electorate would exercise the willful blindness required to provide Bush with not just another four years, but the legitimacy his first term lacked. The inescapable reality of Bush's reelection is that the Bush Doctrine isn't going away, and to the horror of most of the world, it may very well shape the immediate geopolitical future.

Between October 24, 1945, the day the United Nations Charter came into effect, and September 17, 2002, the day President Bush unveiled his National Security Strategy, the nations of the world existed under the assumption that without United Nations approval, one country could not legally attack another country unless that country had invaded it first. This assumption, as codified in articles 2(4) and 51 of the United Nations Charter, was designed to permit nations to defend themselves against armies crossing borders—not against nations providing material support to terrorist operations, charismatic weapons-collecting dictators inspiring the masses to hate anyone's way of life, or "evildoers" whose removal is deemed essential to rid the world of some imaginary force of darkness.

The Bush Doctrine radically reinterprets the term "self-defense," a term about which there used to be a wide consensus that was at least partially responsible for the relative stability the world has enjoyed since the last World War. Today, as far as the United States is concerned, self-defense includes preemptive military action against a country governed by any regime that the President concludes would like to harm the United States, regardless of whether that regime even has the capability to do so.

It would be absurd, clearly, to imagine a law that would excuse a man who killed his neighbor and claimed in court that he acted in self-defense because the dead man was evil, and that, despite the fact that the dead man never threatened any harm, his very existence was such a dire threat to the killer's way of life that he had to be eliminated. Such a law would be absurd because it would allow a lot of people to be murdered for no particularly good reason.

Bush has alienated important American allies with his smug superiority and defiant unilateralism, but more important than this shortsighted impoliteness, Bush's foreign policy has made the United States and the rest of the world more vulnerable to instability and violence. The rights and duties of nations under international law are, generally

ally speaking, reciprocal. That is, if the United States has the right to invade other nations to remove exaggerated or even imaginary threats, that right extends to every other country as well. Should other nations choose to exercise that right, the United States, with its over-extended military and less-than-enthusiastic allies, may become responsible for any number of new regional conflicts. But regardless of whether other countries are willing to invoke the Bush Doctrine themselves, the increased possibility of an unprovoked military attack by an enemy country has supplied proponents of nuclear proliferation with sufficient justification and domestic support. The combination of Bush's warmongering and scattered attention has resulted in increased weapons production not only in Iran and North Korea, but in fearful countries across Asia and the Middle East.

Because the Bush Doctrine requires only that a regime meet the vague criteria of posing a gathering danger before military action may be taken, it has incredible potential for abuse. The president himself may, at his discretion, identify the threats to be preemptively defended against. Such a process, if undertaken in good faith, requires a case-by-case evaluation based on known facts, which might be less worrisome if President Bush didn't consistently make decisions without regard for facts—and then advertise his disregard as "certainty," "conviction," or "faith." When reality becomes inconvenient, Bush and his staff ignore it or simply repeat that things are not as they seem, and if they repeat it enough times and with sufficient authority, they are believed. In effect, the Bush Doctrine requires only that the president allege some threat—real, imagined, or manufactured—and thus empowers him to attack any country he likes at any time.

The only checks that remain on the president's exercise of military force are sheer military feasibility and American public opinion. And yet in the face of incontrovertible evidence that Bush overrode the national security interests of the United States and all reliable intelligence information to carry out his personal agenda in Iraq, public opinion remains mysteriously on the side of the president and his gross errors of judgment. The American people have now had the opportunity to hold Bush accountable for four years of rogue behavior without a mandate, and most have, instead, chosen to affirm his policies and his vision of America and its place in the world. Now the president will have four more years in which to carry out his whims and whatever it is his gut—or his God—tells him to do next, all in the name of the people of the United States of America. ■

*Penelope Blackwell is a pseudonym for an author and attorney with a background in international law.*



Randall Sellers, Untitled, 2004

## It's Not Enough to Be Right

from CAMPAIGN page 1

Democrats have always been good at inactivity, and good at losing. They have their industries of dissent to maintain, their *Harper's* magazines to cry into and their punk rock protests to attend with other punk rockers. They have their always increasing quota of self-abuse to meet, in articles like this one.

"Liberals are afraid to have power," the MoveOn staffer said. "And this is what power is: power is working your butt off to gain every single scrap of ground that you gain on your agenda."

Attacking other Americans personally; insulting their intelligence and their faith; employing outdated stereotypes about who chooses to live in the exurbs and suburbs of the country's midsection; ignoring the fact that when you get real close to the electoral map, the vote in the red and blue states is closer than it looks—these are all, ultimately, losing strategies. They're also gigantic wastes of time.

The same MoveOn staffer also said that she had never expected Kerry to win.

"Once you get out of the myopia [of a heavily pro-Kerry city] and you start to look at the big picture, then you see the reality is that people support Bush."

MoveOn worked by setting up a shadow system of electoral registration. After signing up voters, MoveOn members solicited pledges, or commitments to vote, from them. On November 2, they kept track of who voted, and rounded up the negligent.

MoveOn was the most hierarchically structured of the many groups that were both building the progressive community and competing for its attention this fall. It's so organized, in fact, that the precinct leader who I spent election day with had her watch synchronized to her next in command's; she called HQ every hour, on the thirty-third minute, to report her totals before promptly hanging up, no time for pleasantries.

But as tight a ship as they ran, MoveOn (like other liberal groups) was legally prohibited from collaborating with the Kerry campaign, and my senior MoveOn source said this split was yet another one of the challenges her organization faced.

Groups that catered specifically to the youth vote were even less aligned the party, embracing the decentralized, anti-authoritarian ideals of their constituents. These dispersed, autonomous clusters of like-minded people weren't just legally separated from Kerry's strategy (unlike the Republican camp, where Karl Rove and Ralph Reed chatted on conference calls). They were also, in many ways, ideologically opposed to the Democratic Party itself.

This fracturing of fronts, coupled with the party's move to the right—its pandering to conservatives and alienating of radicals that satisfies no one—prevented cooperation between D.C. and outsider efforts, perpetuating the perception of a desperate, "anyone but Bush" tactic—a myth that wounded Kerry, who was, in reality, a fine candidate and perfectly qualified to hold the nation's highest office.

Among the set of youth-oriented groups was New York-based Downtown for Democracy (D4D), one built, like many others, on a system of pledge-gathering and election day head-counting. D4D raised money for Democratic candidates, combining marketing and promotions with political field operations to reach out to youth in urban areas. They held an art auction, sponsored a reading featuring Jonathan Safran Foer, Dave Eggers and Jhumpa Lahiri, organized a John Sayles film screening, and threw concerts and parties in swing states.

There's no question that D4D and its fellow youth-focused activists did their best to energize and recharge young progressives. Indeed, Music for America (MFA), which sponsored concerts and voter-registration efforts nationwide, reported that more than fifty percent of registered voters between 18 and 26 years of age came out to vote this year, as opposed to thirty percent in 2000; in swing states, sixty-four percent did. And unlike in 2000, when Bush and Gore split that demographic, young voters went for Kerry over Bush by ten percentage points. Of course, that increase in participation was matched by an increase in voter participation across the board.

D4D succeeded not only in turning out a reported 100 percent of their pledges in Dayton, Ohio, but in bringing some life to the party. Karthik Pandian, who produced the Creative

Control tour (which brought the English band Bloc Party to Philadelphia in October), said that the tour was extremely well received.

"In Dayton and Toledo they're starving for stuff like this," said Pandian. "Nobody's ever done something like this before."

Powered by an East Coast cultural elite, D4D was a niche project with niche appeal. But in their own way, they did their best to mix things up.

"It was a priority for us to engage in different subcultures," Pandian explained, "so I made sure that whenever we were throwing parties in the same city, that each night was a different genre. We had a hip-hop night, a house night ..."

No one can say what the youth vote would have been like without these groups, and leaders like MFA's Mike Connery stress the long-term goal of building a sustainable progressive community over the short-term disappointment of November 3. But as far as tools for producing that short-term victory go, something is clearly lacking. To get to the point: sustainability is great, but I wanted Kerry to win.

Republicans, it has been said, have positioned themselves in a place to maximize their alignment with existing majority opinion. In order for Democrats to tip the balance in their favor, they bear the burden of changing the majority opinion.

Quite simply, digging up nonvoting Democrats in urban centers isn't good enough. Building a progressive coalition of the like-minded isn't good enough. Nor is driving the liberal message on a celebrity bus tour through the heartland. People do not have to be belittled or marketed to, they have to be persuaded, and that does not happen by sponsoring a rock concert or handing out designer T-shirts. I think it might happen when you talk to someone, one on one, for many hours, to build alliances, slowly—the same strategy that Christians use to build churches—but I'm not sure. After all, I've been talking to my mom for many hours for many years now, and it hasn't done much good.

Laura Dawn, event and cultural director for MoveOn, relayed the story of meeting students at the Vote for Change tour, which brought star power like Michael Stipe and the Dixie Chicks together to spread the we're-not-saying-Kerry's-name-but-don't-vote-for-Bush gospel.

"I asked them how they were going to vote, and they said they were just there to see Dave Matthews," she recalled. "They were going to vote for Bush."

"D4D's success is difficult to measure, it's just not quantifiable in numbers," Pandian said. "The Creative Control tour was all about energizing and mobilizing the creative communities of these cities. It's not just hard numbers."

It's only natural that artists make art and party planners plan parties and that, in an election year, they do those things with political intent. But I'm tired of being energized and I'm tired of being mobilized and I'm tired of losing. The hard numbers do count, and I'm tired of them coming up short. I'm tired of the Democratic Party paying lip service to the left and moving its positions to the right and ignoring socially-minded people of faith. And most of all, I'm tired of easy solutions to a hard problem, which is that some people fundamentally disagree on the best way to run a nation, and until enough of those somebodies switch sides, we don't have a chance. Our task is not simply to build up from within, it's to branch out; it's to be evangelical about our politics.

No number of music festivals or fashion shows or celebrity spokespeople or antagonism and name-calling is going to get to the heart of the matter, which is the dire necessity for those on the left to kindly, calmly, and thoughtfully persuade those on the right of the worth of our plans and the value of our visions. Of course Republicans say "liberal" like it's "leper;" of course they're smug and infuriating and rude. But when your guy got fewer votes, "he started it" is a pretty lame excuse. It's the logic of whiners and losers.

So enough with the gimmicks and the giveaways and the superiority complexes. If liberals are serious about winning, if we are serious about being in power, then it's time to forget about Bruce Springsteen and Marc Jacobs and it's time to stop talking to each other. Start talking to them. And before talking, start listening. That's what my mom said we should do, and I believe her. ■

## The Other South of the Border

from MEXICO page 1

labor organizers, and attempting to organize a sweatshop requires eternal optimism). Since the PRI still controls local government, however, just as many people think change is impossible. Next week, Verónica will go to the polls not to vote but to cross out her name on the list of voters to ensure that no one claims her vote. "But one candidate has to be at least a little bit better than the other," I protested. She raised her eyebrows. I am so naive.

Last week, I huddled near the TV, watching an apparently stoned Tom Brokaw deliver the election results, or lack thereof, as Verónica and her family slept. At midnight, defeated by both the alarmingly red map in Democracy Plaza and the cockroaches scuttling past my feet, I went to bed. Tuesday had also been the Day of the Dead, and it seemed appropriate to turn off the TV just as the Mexican souls were retreating, well-fed and drunk on Tecate, to their places of eternal rest. Maybe Dubya would go with them, I thought. Maybe this was all a dream.

After flipping the TV back on the next morning and discovering that it was not, I talked to anyone who would listen about the election. As close as people here are to Texas, they are by no means fans of Bush; many, it seems, will never forgive him for halting negotiations with Fox on amnesty for undocumented immigrants after September 11, and Mexicans were largely opposed to the war in Iraq. Still, my friends here met my ranting about the election with little more than polite interest.

"Ah, that's your job, isn't it?" Verónica's sister Biri said when I explained that I had stayed up late watching the election.

A few hours later, I talked to her mother about it. "People in Ohio had to wait fifteen hours to vote," I said. She shook her head sympathetically but didn't reply. Fifteen hours? What is fifteen hours to a veteran of lines?

By that afternoon, when I found out that Kerry conceded, I had lost most of my eloquence. "Bush is just so stupid!" I yelled at the TV.

"Yes! He is!" I exclaimed. Finally, someone understood.

But the discussion didn't go any further. Verónica had spoken of Bush's puppet strings with absolute disinterest. It was as if she had said, "I've always felt like he's a bad soccer player." There was no undertone of shock. Some presidents are puppets, and some are not.

The primary lesson of Mexican politics is that people who are in power stay in power. After seven decades of rule by the PRI, it can hardly be deemed unusual when a president—even a stupid, lying taker of endless vacations—is reelected. The only change here comes for a month or two every three years, when the candidates here campaign, and life for the average Mexican improves marginally. As I write this, I am drinking out of a cup imprinted with the face of a city council candidate. The only other time people here get free goods is when the evangelicals come around—and the T-shirts they hand out are usually used.

And then, after the elections, life returns to normal. There are no more free concerts (the Kumbia Kings played outside the supermarket on Saturday), no giveaways, and certainly no tractors. People get out their shovels again.

After a few more Bushes in the White House, maybe, our system will pretty much resemble the Mexican model. (Mexico, meanwhile, might be on its way to democracy.) I'll adjust my thinking, I'm sure. If I'm still visiting people here when Jeb Bush is elected to his fourth term in 2020, I'll be able to talk about his presidency dispassionately, or, better yet—and this is the real test—not about it at all. In exchange for my complacency, I'll expect Jeb to clean up my neighborhood every four years, to make an appearance once in a while, and to at least talk like I matter. Do you hear that, Jeb? And I better get a free T-shirt.

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## OPINION

### COMMON SENSE

We Have More in Common With Bush Supporters Than We Think

BY LANCE HAVER

Who among us believed that John Kerry offered any real solutions? Bush's victory was predictable and in many ways justified. We failed to offer Americans real options or real answers to their fears. We didn't inspire them or earn their trust. We need to organize, of course, but around what? The same issues we have been? That's the real question. To answer it I believe must accept the following:

1) The people who voted for Bush are not all ignorant, right wing lunatics. The majority of Bush supporters are more like us than they are different from us. They want quality schools, enough income to live, job security, health care, a better future for their children, decent, safe neighborhoods and safe retirement. Don't we share these goals? Our differences are in how we achieve these goals, not in the goals themselves. If we start the conversation by demonizing those that don't agree with us, how do we talk to them to show them our point of view?

2) We are winning the war on social issues. I know that many of the right wing pundits are saying social issues led to Bush's victory. And those of us who proudly support gay marriages and a woman's right to decide when and if she will have a child are saddened that others are attacking us to secure their voter base, but the attacks don't change the tide of history. As progressives we all too often focus on where we haven't gotten to yet instead of how far we have come. In the last fifty years there have been tremendous progressive strides on almost all social issues. Fifty years ago, in 1954, racism and sexism were not just problems; they were the law of the land. Forget about abortion or the morning after pill—contraception was illegal. As late as 1972 the liberal state of Massachusetts was arresting people for providing contraceptives to unmarried women. Women and minorities could be refused mortgages, insurance, jobs, almost anything, just because they were women or minorities. Less than twenty-five years ago, David Duke, a leader of the KKK, was considered an electable candidate for governor in Louisiana. Our sense of social justice has changed to such a large extent that even the right wingers have to have people of color in their administrations. In 1954 was the issue of gay marriages being debated? Of course not; homosexuality was illegal. Now even Bush gives lip service to gay rights. This is not to say that we don't have a long way to go, or that that justice delayed is not justice denied. It is just to place where we are in a historical context.

3) We have lost ground on economic justice

over the last fifty years. On some level, everyone knows that. Once, many families were able to enter the middle class with only one person working. Now it is almost impossible. Instead our middle class is getting squeezed, with more and more money floating to the top ten percent and more and more people sinking to the bottom.

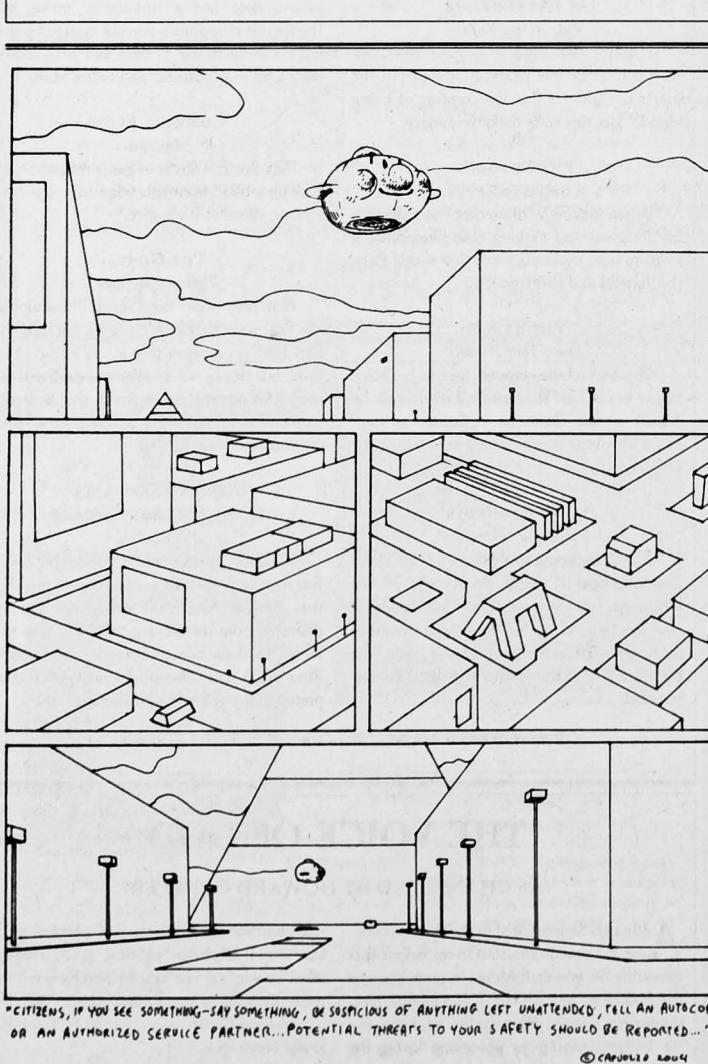
4) The culture of cutthroat capitalism has permeated our society. There is no real job security, no safety net; companies lay off workers without conscience, close factories without concern, merge and throw thousands out of work, and all so a handful of the very rich can become even richer. American society has become less civil. And those hurt by these changes, which are the majority of Americans, are looking for someone to blame.

The corporatists use our fears and loss of civility to confuse people into voting against their own interests. The reason why, they say, we feel insecure, unsure about the future and under attack, the reason why our society is less civil is because of the moral decay of abortion and gay rights.

On the other hand it is we who all too often attack the folks who are feeling insecure instead of offering an alternative reason why people feel under attack, attack the folks who are feeling insecure. Instead of joining with people who are feeling the difficulties caused by the cutthroat capitalists, we attack them. We tell them they are dumb, ignorant and just plain stupid and then wonder why they don't vote for our candidates.

It is time for us to join with those who are feeling hard pressed by our economic system. We must make an attempt to show that we are on the same side. We must organize with them for affordable utilities, insurance, housing and day care. It is time for us to say yes, you are right to feel more insecure, but not because a couple of people you don't know are getting married in someplace you have never been, but because the XYZ company is overcharging you, taking your job and trying to pollute your drinking water. And that multinational corporations have no loyalty to people in our countries, just their wealthy stockholders. If we want to lead, at the very least we have to champion issues that people feel, understand and support. It may feel more comfortable to speak with people who already agree with us; it just doesn't do that much good. And we must finally admit to ourselves that we can't call the people who voted for Bush names and then wonder why they don't like us.

Lance Haver is director of consumer affairs for the city of Philadelphia.



"CITIZENS, IF YOU SEE SOMETHING—SAY SOMETHING, OR SUSPICIOUS OF ANYTHING LEFT UNATTENDED, TELL AN AUTOCOP OR AN AUTHORIZED SERVICE PARTNER... POTENTIAL THREATS TO YOUR SAFETY SHOULD BE REPORTED..."

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## ESSAY

## CALL YOUR MOM

When the President Makes War, It's Time For Us to Make Nice

BY ERIK BADER

To the States or anyone of them,  
or any city of the States,  
Resist much, very little.  
Once unquestioning obedience,  
one fully ensured.  
Once fully ensured, no nation,  
state, city of the earth,  
ever afterward resumes its liberty.  
—Walt Whitman

I was at the Khyber, among ten or so of my friends, all of us looking up with dismay at the television set hung in the corner of the room, offering a hallway of drama before last call, bracing ourselves for the inevitable, as the map of the United States of America, which is the country that we live in, relentlessly filled up with the menacing color red, reminiscent of that scene in M. Night Shyamalan's *Signs* where the family watches the alien invasion being tracked on a map in exactly the same shape as the one we were watching, like deer frozen helplessly in the incoming headlights of impending doom. But you know, here, here are some of the things you could have heard:

"Fucking mom!"  
"Fu-ack!"  
"Omnimom."

"Well, see you in Omaha..."

"I can't watch this."

"You're gonna be fucking kidding me!"

"Raw power is gonna come summ' to  
Omaha!"

(The last quote is appropriate one, was Iggy Pop, on the phone.)

Not to say I didn't see it coming. The facts buried somewhere in a dark place between the intersection of Idealism and Hope, I guess I knew it all along. But from late September until the second November something special seemed to be hovering in the autumnal air around the streets of Philadelphia. Like the charged ammunition of the Rivers heading towards the sea in '77, there was a heartstrong feeling that maybe, just maybe, the impossible was going to happen—that although there had been wrongs committed in our name by our country, those wrongs were soon going to be righted, and Good would indeed triumph over Evil, that a few decent people were actually going to make a difference. I wasn't old enough to vote in '92 when Clinton ran against Bush, but it must have felt good to have seen this kind of guy win like rock and roll, smoked joints, played sex, and wasn't afraid to show up on MTV to "Rock the Vote" go our there and win like that. But this year it felt more urgent, more pressing—maybe P. Diddy was being presumptuous when he said "Vote or Die" this felt *big*, bigger than what the Boss was going, or Michael Moore, or angry street stinks, or the countless suits of licensed punk rockers that was pressed in the hopes of getting this guy out of office once and for all. There were old guys I knew from South Philly who were voting for the first time since McGovern ran against Nixon in '72. Back in the summer I was in the smoking lounge of a bar coming from Florida, heading up the coast to Virginia. A barmy night haunted by thunderstorms, it was past lights-out and I couldn't sleep. There were seven of us in that bar, all insomniacs, chain-smoking the night away and passing around what parties we had with us. We were seven total strangers, and every person in that room was firmly against George W. Bush.

I woke up early on the second, an impossible bright and clear morning, and I voted. It felt real, pressing the button and seeing it light up red (Biiii Red!). I walked out of the place feeling strong, confident, important. All over the city that afternoon you saw kids from various grass-roots organizations waving Kerry propaganda proudly up at the blue sky. You couldn't go anywhere without hearing people young and old breathlessly discussing the election, reminding them to vote... there was a nervous buoyancy that everyone seemed to share, all of us in this together, a confidence that we were going to win.

"Thank God," a good friend of mine told me the night before. "When Kerry wins we're all gonna get laid. That's a fact. There's some motherfucks out there who haven't gotten laid *one* in the past four years. But mark my words, shit's gonna change *real soon*."

I wanted that change. I didn't want to feel ashamed *as an American*. I didn't want to feel that my opinions were the minority in a country that I loved, or at least thought I loved. I don't think I've ever felt more *patriotic* (a word I don't

think I've ever typed in a story or essay in my life) than I did that morning and afternoon.

Did I think things were going to be different? I mean did I believe that suddenly life was going to be better, that people would be happier, everyone would make more money, the war would suddenly stop, that everyone was going to get *laid*? No, of course not. If anything it was the *glove* that I was hoping for as I was brushing my teeth and getting ready to go out and watch the votes come in on the television with some friends. If Kerry had won there would have been that *glove*, would have felt it radiating from everyone everywhere you went, in the bars and cafes and the streets and at work, *everywhere*. A smile on your face, a skip in your step, and later that night? Hell, maybe you *could* have gotten laid after all. But the power feeling of *making a difference*, even if it's a small difference, like let's say you had protested the needless bulldozing of an old tree that some developer wanted knocked down and so you got some good folks together and wrote letters and petitions and people signed the petitions and then it *worked*, the tree survived unscathed, and you were the one who had saved it. That tremendous feeling of pride and accomplishment you'd have, passing by that wise old tree every day knowing that you had *made a difference*. Things weren't necessarily going to get better if Kerry had been elected into office, not any time soon anyhow, but we would have shared that feeling that because we had made a difference, that same day, perhaps years from now, things were going to get better.

I went to the ragtag "protest" in Love Park that evening, really just a bunch of disgruntled punk rockers, political types, and cool kids standing around in the chilly blue Center City twilight, some looking defeated, some shouting anti-war epithets, some just shouting the breeze and figuring out where to get a beer later. One guy came up to me and tied a black piece of fabric around the arm of my corduroy jacket, and though I felt it looked ridiculous, it felt nice having some stranger tie it on there, like he knew what I was going through. United we fall, I guess.

Working at the Philadelphia Regional Publishing Terminal later that night I spoke to a number of guys down there about how the felt regarding the results of the election. The prevailing sense was that most of them couldn't have given a shit either way. One guy brought up something I hadn't even considered—the historic fact that never has America switched presidents during a war.

"Who the fuck would do *that*?" he told me. "I mean here we are in the middle of a fucking war with these guys... what the fuck would happen if some new guy came into office and was like, okay let's try to sit down and talk peace with these guys? What do you think they'd do, after we've been bombing the *fuck* out of them for the past year or so? They'd blow us the fuck *up* what they'd do. That's all there is to it."

That's obviously not all there is to it, but on a straight and from the streets level there's absolutely nothing faulty with his logic. In fact it makes perfect sense. We are a country that has experienced terrorism, and we are now, like it or not, in the middle of a war, and terrorism and war means guns and bombs and these are things that make hardworking people with families *afraid*. Fear is the most primal emotion we have— even animals have it—and fear is inextricably linked with survival. You want to survive, you eliminate that which is causing your fear. I do not think that the votes of Red State America were overwhelmingly dictated by opinions on abortion, or gay marriage, or stem cell research. I think that at the end of the day your average working class American couldn't give a rat's ass when it comes to these matters. I believe that the overriding emotion that won this election was *fear*. How could anyone vote for someone so *dumb*? It's one of the biggest questions the majority of my peers have asked since Wednesday. But command of the English language and educated opinions aren't going to win a fight, the average guy on the street will tell you. I think that to most Americans this election was a question of the tough guy and the smart guy. They chose the tough guy.

The big question that seems to be on the tips of the tongues of most of the people who I knew who had invested quite a lot into this election seems to be now what. Because let's face it, maybe that night at the bar or party you were at you swore up and down to your friends that you were going to exultate in France, or Canada,



Above, a woman at the John Kerry rally at Love Park on October 25. She was shouting, "It's the Antichrist! You'll see!" Below, the assembled crowd. Photographs by Matthew Zandy.

or wherever, but guess what—you're not. Unless you are filthy rich and/or hate your family and never want to see them again you are not going to leave the country, and by the time you have procured a new citizenship and renounced your old one there will be a new president anyway. And so the question remains: *now what?*

I know I'm going to overstep my bounds here with this part, make gross overstatements, and virtue generalizations, but it's a jarringly transition, going from testing at a loss for words and diving headlong into writing an essay with the simultaneously sincere and presumptuous hope that it could possibly make things *better*. It's a windy day to be tossing caution, but here goes. It is my observation in my brief twenty-eight years on this planet and in this country that my generation is generally an unhappy one, but although I despise that smirking gang of Texan thugs as much as the next liberal guy or gal, in the end I do not believe that trading one filthy rich white guy for another filthy rich white guy is going to make anyone I have ever known in my life any happier. I mean intrinsically happier, than they already are. That last idea came from my father, whom I spoke to the night after Bush declared victory. Our telephone conversation went like this. For the record, my old man voted for Kerry.

Father: How's it going?

Son: Eh, you know.

F. What: What's wrong. [Deadpan, an inflection.]

S. I mean the election, and all. Four more years.

F. Oh will you get off it? It was a tossup between two rich white guys from the east. What's the difference which one you get?

S. But pop, I mean, you can't just *be* to the country and get caught doing it and—

F. Erik, they're *presidents*. Name one who didn't lie.

I didn't say George Washington, but the old man had made his point. And maybe it was right. We *could* have had that glow, for sure, but once that glow had faded, and fate it would, it would have been back to business as usual. This is not a justification for Bush winning the election. This is a means towards a provisional answer to the question of *now what*.

The fact is that we aren't as nice to each other as we could be. Even the neatest among us could perhaps even be a little mean. Going out into the streets holding up banners and screaming at total strangers because they are wearing business suits is not going to change the fact that you haven't called your parents in some time and told them that you loved them. So why not do it right now? Put down this paper,

and tell them that you love them. Put down this paper, and tell them that you love them. So why not do it right now? Put down this paper,

## A POLITICAL PÂTÉ

BY SYDNEY J. BEVERIDGE

On September 29, 2004, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has the production and sale of his *go* in California Ducks and geese resume.

On October 21, 2004 presidential candidate

and Senator John Kerry goes goose hunting in Ohio. Ducks and geese resume.

On November 3, 2004, a bald eagle flies over a bus of defeated Kerry volunteers with a flat tire. Passengers pause from wallowing.

## DISPATCH

## AUDITING THE POLLS

A Bala Cynwyd Firm Tracks Voter Compliance On Election Day

BY HARRY R. COOK

I work with a company called InfoVoter Technologies in Bala Cynwyd. In the months leading up to Election Day we created the MyVoter Alert Line, one of the cornerstones of NBC News' election coverage. On Election Day, the MyVoter call processing center was located at the National Constitution Center in Independence Mall.

With the help of NBC, civil rights organizations and the *New York Times*, we spread word of our 1-800 number around the country. Anyone who didn't know where to vote could dial in for free and hear their correct polling location, and anyone with a complaint or questions about registration, absentee ballots, harassment could record a message on the system before being transferred to their local county election board. All messages were prioritized by time, location and type of complaint and were analyzed in real time to identify any systemic problems while they could still be corrected.

And even before Election Day, the problems began to turn up. In the two weeks leading up to November 2, we helped NBC identify 10,000 missing ballots in Broward County, Florida, forcing the Broward County supervisor of elections to file an emergency absentee ballot to Florida voters around the country. By the time polls had closed on November 2, MyVoter had received more than 200,000 phone calls from confused, concerned and angry voters. Due in large part to NBC's wide footprint and the ability of partner organizations, as well as print media like the *New York Times* to disseminate our 1-800-number, we received calls from a broad sample of the American electorate.

Many of the Election Day hiccups, such as Pennsylvania and Florida, were identified in the days leading up to November 2. While it is hard to take a single audio file regarding a particular type of ballot confusion, machine failure, poll intimidation or provisional ballot issue and draw far-reaching conclusions, it was easy to find and analyze overarching themes associated with voting difficulties throughout the country. Over the next few weeks, the Pew Institute of Government at Penn will be conducting a more detailed and layered precinct-level analysis of the calls MyVoter took over twelve days, some trends are already evident.

In this particular case, we have identified the problem and we know the actors involved; however, we do not know who in particular is to blame. Certain questions remain unanswered and must be resolved. What registration forms were used in Pennsylvania—and did it matter?

Without placing blame on any one actor, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is an excellent example of what went wrong. Out of about 1800 counties in the United States, fifty accounted for more than half of the MyVoter volume.

Seven of these fifty were in Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Philadelphia, Montgomery, Delaware, Bucks, Westmoreland and Chester, in descending call volume. These seven Pennsylvania counties alone generated nine percent of all MyVoter's call traffic.

Whereas calls from Texas focused on hours, locations and long lines for early voting and calls from Florida focused on potential voters not receiving absentee ballots, most calls from Allegheny County were from voters who hadn't received their registration cards and were unsure of whether or not they'd be allowed to vote.

To understand why this might have occurred, we need to evaluate the structures of federalism and how they affect election administration at the state level, as well as the role of independent registration organizations and anachronistic, under-funded and understaffed county bureaucracies.

Election administration is the responsibility of each state. In most states the secretary of state is the office responsible for election administration. More often than not, the secretary

of state transfers this responsibility to the 1800 county governments, leaving a lot of room for errors of miscommunication and coordination.

Pennsylvania counties, like Philadelphia, offer county specific registration forms. However, potential voters have the opportunity to file state and federal registration forms through the secretary of state's office.

Over the last year, our state's battleground status made it into a focal point for registration efforts organized by MyVoter, MyVoter and MyVoter.

Somewhere along the way, especially in swing areas like Allegheny County—which contains both the city of Pittsburgh and its suburbs—a real or perceived registration failure occurred. By November 2, Allegheny County had garnered more calls than any other county in the country.

What does this mean to the average voter or potential voter on Election Day? If a potential voter does not have confirmation of voter registration, they then have no idea what voting district they belong to or where to go and cast a ballot. When the potential voter finally makes it to a polling location, correctly or incorrectly, they face another set of problems. Perhaps the county board of elections has a backlog and has not yet placed the potential voter's name on the polling list. Perhaps the potential voter is not registered at all. Within this electoral culture, the voter is either challenged and leaves or is challenged and fills out a provisional ballot to be sorted out later.

In either case, a first time voter forced to go through such rigorous efforts to cast their vote is just as likely not to even try. With this in mind, in Pennsylvania and states across the country with similar registration processing problems, we will never know the actual number of potential voters disenfranchised on Election Day 2004.

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Such efforts would solve the major failures already discovered by the MyVoter project across the board this year and avoid many of the troubles that are sure to be discovered as we further examine data from Election Day.

*Harry R. Cook* is based in Center City Philadelphia, works under Ken Smukler at InfoVoter Technologies and is director of Philly.com.

## SPORT

## THE CURSE

The Sox Beat a Losing Streak While the Dems Extended Theirs

BY IAN HUNTINGTON

BOSTON, Mass.—In late October, I thought New Englanders could actually have it all: victories in both the Red Sox and John Kerry, an end to eighteen years of bad luck and four years of bad ideas in a two week span. On the morning of November 5, I realized how tenuous the Kerry-Sox connection had been. The Sox players are not from Massachusetts, after all; they're Red State guys. The team was a self-proclaimed "band of idiots" whose unofficial spokesman, Johnny Damon, said that thinking inhibited baseball performance a perfect team for America's most anti-intellectual President in history (Run bases and start wars "from your gut.") The players also freely shared their strong Christian faith, peppering post-game

interviews with testimonials of a jock Jesus who kept rambunctious in place and this time, came through in the clutch. Combine this with the extreme wealth and the baseline homophily of a major league locker room (ah yes, "moral values"), and the 2004 Red Sox were Republicans in steroids. During the pennant run, liberal Bostonians overlooked these facts. But just days after the World Series, we couldn't ignore the sight of star pitcher Curt Schilling shouting for Bush in New Hampshire. Ultimately we discovered that the Red Sox victory had been closely tied to the presidential race, but not as we had hoped; it had been a premonition of yet another curse, one whose time for breaking, sadly, had not come.

## CIVICS

## OUR VOTING MACHINES

Herd Red Dots Into Black Boxes to Decide the World's Fate

The Danaher ELECTronic 1242 is a machine that counts votes. It is the size of a linebacker and the color of old pancake batter. It sits on little wheels and can collapse to about a third of its size. When fully erect, royal blue curtains hang from its plastic arms. In this chamber, the voter is confronted by a full-face ballot, meaning that the voter can view the entire ballot without having to scroll down. The names of the offices up for election are listed from top to bottom, and the parties from left to right. By law, the governor's party comes first, then the other major party, and then the two recognized third parties, Libertarian and Constitution. All other parties follow in alphabetical order.

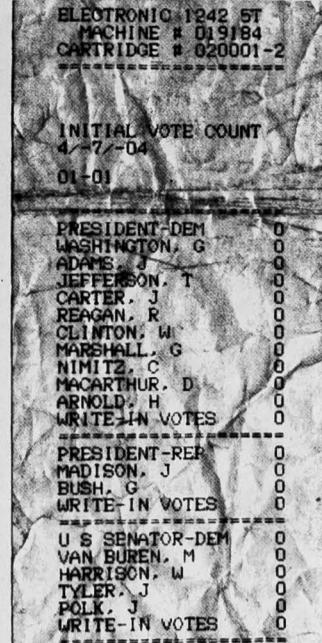
Before each voter enters this modest cabana of democracy, the polling attendant must set the machine, and, if the election is a primary, fix the ELECTronic to the appropriate party setting. Now the machine is ready, and a little red light dances beside the name of each office. When the voter touches the pressure-sensitive

cell of his chosen candidate, the red light jumps to that name. (Watching the dancing red lights doesn't seem quite as rigged as pressing some newfangled ATM-like touchscreen, although it can't compare to the electromechanical pleasure of pulling an old fashioned lever, a treat still enjoyed by many Delaware County voters today.) The only time a pen and paper are involved are when a voter chooses to write in a candidate and a small slot opens with a spool of paper to record the alternate choice. Voters may change their selections as many times as they like before pushing a rectangular green button all the way down at the right side of the screen marked "VOTE." Then there is no more changing.

In 1993, Democrat William Stinson won the Second Senatorial District by 461 votes. Twenty campaign workers were later indicted for drumming up phony absentee ballots, ballots which supported Stinson four-to-one. Per the usual, U.S. Attorneys talked tough, a few wrists were slapped and a task force was

formed. They advised the city to switch to an electronic system. The voters approved the recommendation in 1998 and four years later, in 2002, the 200-pound Danaher behemoths finally arrived, by which time some said the machines were outdated. But Robert "Bob" Lee, the Philadelphia Board of Elections administrator who supervised the installation of the machines, defended the ELECTronic. When it comes to voting, he said, reliability is more important than keeping pace with every innovation.

Since 2000, there have been many concerns raised nationwide over electronic voting systems. Complaints include the lack of a paper receipt for the vote, the lack of a uniform national system of tabulation, the ease with which professors, students and engineers have hacked into models like the Diebold AccuVote-TS, and the machines' own erratic behavior in places like Boone County, Indiana, where one system recorded more than 144,000 votes cast by fewer than 19,000 voters. Nevertheless, the Committee of Seventy, a political watchdog group, released a report early this year endorsing the ELECTronic. And Lee's 2001 *Philadelphia City Commissioners' Office Report* strenuously argues in favor of the machines. The report says the ELECTronic eliminates the old lever-machine practice of having one official call out the result for each candidate at each polling station, and having



Who ever said civil servants don't have a sense of humor? Not us. A sample ballot receipt from the Danaher lists candidates from days of yore.

another write it down—saving officials the trouble of writing down an estimated three and a half million numbers. With the ELECTronic, elected polling officials will have nary a calculation to make or number to note. The computer does it all.

"You have no idea what a relief it is," he said. "Not to have to get mad at someone for human error."

The ELECTronic stores votes on its memory board and a removable cartridge inside the machine. On the night of the election, police officers pick up the cartridges and receipts from the city's 1,681 polling places, deposit them in vinyl bags and transport them to one of seven waystations. Twenty civil service employees then upload them onto a copy of the board's database. The Associated Press, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Daily News*, as well as five television stations pay \$1,500 in subscription fees per election to watch the votes being counted in real time. The media does a lot of their election forecasting with exit polls, but they use this database to call a winner. The government, however, waits until Friday, when twelve people repeat the process of uploading all the cartridges and factor in paper absentee and valid provisional ballots as well. Two weeks later, two percent of the machines are audited using the seven paper copies of vote totals that each machine spits out on election night. Of these seven copies, one goes to the Democratic

party, one to the Republican party, one is hung on the door of the polling place, one is taken home by the district's Minority Inspector and kept for two years, and the rest go to the Board of Elections.

If someone unplugs an ELECTronic while a voter is in the middle of casting a ballot, it's unlikely the voter will even notice. The machine smoothly, effortlessly switches to battery power; the only sign is the disappearance of soft light emanating from the booth's doors. The red lights do not flicker, and the vote is counted only once, said Lee.

"They have a battery. You can just keep on voting," he explained, during a visit to the board's office at Delaware and Spring Garden. It was a slow day in early summer, and they were still sifting through the aftermath of the primary.

To demonstrate, Lee reset the machine and invited the visitor to cast pretend votes. As he punched buttons labeled Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant with abandon, Lee pulled the plug. Everything went dead. He placed a call to Joe upstairs.

"Is this other machine set up? The battery's dead on this one. I pulled the plug and it just started chirping," he explained to Joe. "It's dead. Believe me. Yeah. Yeah. It's dead."

Joe came down and repeated the experiment on a second machine with a fully charged battery. This time, it was a success.

## ROLL CALL: HOW YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES VOTED

A Selection of Measures from the Last Thirty Days

## PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

FRANK DiCICCO (D): In late October, First District Councilman DiCicco introduced a bill that would ban cruising on South Street between Front, 11th, Lombard and Bainbridge streets between 7 p.m. and 3:30 a.m. First offenses will be punished with fines of \$100 to \$300. The bill defines cruising as driving by the same traffic point three times in two hours, bad news for South Street tailgaters and frustrated parking spotters alike.

FRANK DiCICCO (D) 1st District  
ANNA Verna (D) 2nd District  
JANNIE BLACKWELL (D) 3rd District  
MICHAEL NUTTER (D) 4th District  
DARRELL CLARKE (D) 5th District  
JOAN KRAJEWSKI (R) 6th District  
RICHARD MARIANO (D) 7th District  
DONNA REED MILLER (D) 8th District  
MARIAN TASCO (D) 9th District  
BRIAN O'NEIL (R) 10th Dist.  
DAVID COHEN (D) At Large  
JAMES KENNEY (D) At Large  
BLONDELL REYNOLDS BROWN (D) At Large  
JUAN RAMOS (D) At Large  
JACK KELLY (R) At Large  
FRANK RIZZO (R) At Large

Summary of Bill or Resolution	Votes: Aye, Nay, Not Voting														Result	Status
SCOOT OVER (040764): Bans the sale of the three foot-high mini-motorcycles known as "pocket bikes," and makes it illegal to ride them on public property. See story at bottom right.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 17-0	Sent to Mayor Street for approval.
NEW JOB TAX CREDIT (040640-A): Grants a Job Creation Tax Credit to certain businesses creating new jobs in the city.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 17-0	Sent to Mayor Street for approval.
GAS LINE (040781): Vacates Morse Street from Beach Street to Allen Street and part of Allen Street to make way for a gas main.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 16-1	Sent to Mayor Street for approval.
OUTDOOR DINING (040783): Permits sidewalk cafés to be maintained on both sides of Ninth Street between Christian and Federal streets.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 17-0	Sent to Mayor Street for approval.
CASH FORWARDING (040328-A): Authorizes the city to borrow money for various purposes; provides for a ballot question asking voters to decide whether or not to increase the city's deficit.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 17-0	Signed into law by Mayor Street.

## THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JIM GERLACH (R): Gerlach, a freshman, barely held onto his seat in a hard-fought race with Lois Murphy. Both candidates slung the mud with abandon. Republican ads accused Murphy of supporting the Taliban; the Democrats said Gerlach wanted to build a \$50 million rain forest in Iowa.

ROBERT BRADY (D) 1st DISTRICT  
CHAKA FATTAH (D) 2nd DISTRICT  
JIM GERLACH (R) 6th DISTRICT  
CURT WELDON (R) 7th DISTRICT  
JAMES GREENWOOD (R) 8th DIST.  
JOSEPH HOEFFEL (D) 13th DIST.

Summary of Bill or Resolution	Votes: Aye, Nay, Not Voting							Result	Status
ONLINE PRIVACY (HR 2929): The SPY (Securely Protect Yourself Against Cyber Trespass) Act protects internet users from spyware programs that might transmit personal information without their knowledge.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 399-1	Received in the Senate.
DRAFT DODGING (HR 163): A motion to suspend the rules and pass a bill requiring all U.S. citizens between 18 and 26 years of age to perform two years of military or civilian homeland defense service.	thumb down	thumb down	thumb down	thumb down	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	FAILED 2-402	Failed.
INTELLIGENCE REFORM (HR 10): The 9/11 Recommendations Act calls for intelligence reform to prevent terrorism. Requires the Attorney General to maintain criminal history information checks for employer use.	thumb down	thumb down	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 282-134	In conference with Senate's version of the same bill.

## THE UNITED STATES SENATE

ARLEN SPECTER (R) PA.: Specter is next in line to chair the Senate Judiciary Committee. But after Specter said he'd likely fight any Supreme Court nominee who would overturn Roe v. Wade, many senior anti-abortion Republicans are lobbying against his appointment.

RICK SANTORUM (R) PA.  
ARLEN SPECTER (R) PA.  
JOSEPH BIDEN (D) DE.  
THOMAS CARPER (R) DE.  
FRANK LAUTENBERG (D) NJ.  
JON CORZINE (D) NJ.

Summary of Bill or Resolution	Votes: Aye, Nay, Not Voting							Result	Status
INTELLIGENCE REFORM (S. 2845): National Intelligence Reform Act 2004, a bill to reform the intelligence community and intelligence activities of the federal government.	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	PASSED 96-2	In conference with the House.
FUNDING TERRORISM (S. Amdt 3802): In 1977, the Congress passed the International Economic Emergency Powers Act. If the president declares a national emergency due to a foreign threat, the IEEAP allows him or her to prohibit any financial transaction involving property in which that country or its nationals have an interest. This amendment, submitted by Senator Lautenberg (D-NJ) and co-sponsored by senators Clinton (D-NY), Feingold (D-WI) and Corzine (D-NJ), calls for expanding that law to prevent Americans and American corporations from engaging in financial transactions with countries that have repeatedly provided support for international terrorism. It also gives persons and corporations ninety days to divest such interests. Since the amendment was tabled, the act now only calls for a report, due six months from the bill's passage, exploring the financing of terrorism and recommending ways to curtail such financing.	thumb up	thumb down	thumb up	thumb down	thumb down	thumb down	thumb up	AGREED 47-41	Amendment tabled.
COMMITTEE RULES (S. Amdt 4021): Would allow the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Foreign Relations Committee to serve as non-voting members of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.	thumb down	thumb down	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	thumb up	REJECTED 36-54	Rejected.

## RICK MARIANO'S WAR ON SCOOTERS



was repairing them too, an activity that wasn't covered under their license. Johnson was showering in his apartment upstairs, but his nephew, Lynn Johnson, was working the store.

"He was swearing and cussing that he would close me down no matter what it takes," the elder Johnson reported. "My nephew called him a Communist."

Mariano testified before the Zoning Board of Adjustments and For Your Fun was closed down again. Before it could reopen, Mariano passed the scooter bill.

"It just seems unfair," said Johnson. "I said, 'Just let me sell what they have, and then I'll get out.' He said, 'Sell them on the Internet.' He doesn't care. Why doesn't the guy do something worthwhile?"

Mariano maintains that Johnson's store was illegal. "You shouldn't have done that," he remembers telling Johnson over the telephone. "You never came to me—that that matters." The whole country of Canada banned them. If I was him [Johnson], I would get rid of them real quick. Take them out of the state, take them out of the country. Take them back to China. Mark my words, these bikes are gonna go the way of the laser pointer."

"I have a real motorcycle," he added. "A Harley."

Johnson says he wasn't a nuisance; just a small businessman trying to make his way through the city's intricate licensing laws.

"[Mariano] drove me into bankruptcy," Johnson says. "Everybody else was selling them, but he went after me. Any entrepreneur who wants to come to this city, think twice."

Johnson is left with \$50,000 worth of scooters that are now illegal to sell, and three children to feed, ages 5, 8 and 9. But he still has hope, and is now planning to go into business marketing his optimism and faith to others with the Universal Miracle Research Center. The center's mission, Johnson says, will be not so much to perform, hunt for or discover miracles, but to take miracles that are already out there, investigate their veracity, and notify the media. In so doing, the center will "bring good to the television and Internet, instead of all this bad," Johnson says.

## John McCain Has a Posse

BY FAITH POPINJAY

The best case scenario now is McCain in 2008. And no, not McCain as a converted Democrat. John McCain is smart. He did not become a Republican in some drunken fraternity haze. Party affiliation is one of the primary reasons the Senator from Arizona is so popular. The Republicans have a proven, viable brand, a Coke to the Democrats' Corvair, and McCain displays it with charming, flip flopping, corporation-lambasting inconsistency, in much the half-earnest way a tussled record store clerk sports a pair of Nike Vans. You, too, can display this brand. If there is anything to learn from the recent rise in polo shirt collars, the chart-busting Q-factor of Reaganite stronghold Orange County and the lasting appeal of martinis, it is that the co-opt generation can, and *should*, co-opt the GOP brand. Change your registration, participate in Republican primaries and start *influencing*, in the subtle way you perhaps once influenced the headwear choices of your grammar school classmates, the right-leaning masses.

Because, as the recent election has shown, the masses are leaning right. A Democrat has not won a majority of the popular vote for president since Jimmy Carter, and if talk of Hillary Clinton's hopes for the nomination is anything but wishful rightist thinking, the party is not about to recover its brand equity anytime soon.

Let us not forget what a banner year it was for GOP iconoclasts. First was anti-war elder Bush adviser Brent Scowcroft, then disgruntled Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill and *My Party Too* author Christie Todd Whitman. There was reformed neocon Francis Fukuyama, Reagan speechwriter and chuckling Ron Suskind source Bruce Bartlett, longtime log cabin pundit Andrew Sullivan, and countless lower-level ambassadors, officials and opinion makers.

More recently and notably there was Arlen Specter, our senior senator in Pennsylvania. A

composite of Specter's quarter century voting record at Issues2000.org spit out this description of his politics: "Moderate Liberal Populist." His is a dying breed within the Republican Party. Just this week, Specter's chairmanship of the Senate Judiciary Committee was hurled into doubt when he referred to the right to an abortion as "inviolate." Why aren't more senators backing him up, cutting the old coot some slack? Why not start with our other senator in Pennsylvania, Rick Santorum. In 1993, when prominent state Republicans were deciding who was going to challenge Sen. Harris Wofford, a

YOU CAN STEAL OUR SIGNS  
BUT NOT OUR VOTE!

VOTE BUSH!

*A lawn sign in Delaware County on Election Night. Photograph by Leigh Maida.*

Democrat who'd won the space left open by the 1991 death of moderate Republican Senator John Heinz, Santorum was not everyone's first pick. Specter tried to recruit Teresa Heinz, who decided against it. By early 1994, Santorum was virtually unopposed.

So perhaps you weren't around to sway the future Heinz-Kerry before her party was overrun with Contract With America types in pleated Dockers and shirtsleeves. And you probably didn't vote for Specter in the general election. All this matters less than the fact that, in these desperate times, you probably didn't do so much as mull lending support or time to our senior Senator in his tragically close primary battle against the fervently pro-life National Rifle Association poster child Pat Toomey. In four more years, we'll likely have more important concerns than brand loyalty.

*Faith Popinjay studies the future and designs small vinyl figurines.*

the "Real World," the general conspiratorial tones they adopt when discussing things as pathetically insignificant as whether Frank DiCicco will win back his ward leader position, and their terrible jukebox selections.

You, dear reader, have about as much in common with the average Local 98 member as you do with the average Bob Jones trustee. The difference is that the Bob Jones trustees are on the winning team; they are sponsored by a viable brand. You can be, too. Enough old-school iconoclasts in the Grand Old Party could send the Evangelicals voting for a Third Party Perot type and jump-start the Democrats on their Firestone tires. At the worst, we'd have McCain. In four more years, we'll likely have more important concerns than brand loyalty.

*Faith Popinjay studies the future and designs small vinyl figurines.*

## Did Bush Pray to the Weather Gods?

BY RANDALL SELLERS

Maybe the voting machines malfunctioned and maybe they didn't; maybe the pollwatchers miscounted and maybe they counted just fine. Maybe the media called things too early or maybe they didn't call early enough; maybe voters were disenfranchised and maybe they weren't. People have lots of ideas about why the exit polls weren't like the final counts, and even more ideas about how Bush swept ahead in the final days of what had seemed to be a dead heat. But I have my own theory: the weather.

A Quinnipiac University poll of 1,094 registered Florida voters, conducted August 5 through 10, showed Kerry leading Bush forty-seven to forty-one percent, with seven undecided and four for Nader.

But then came the hurricanes—four of them in just six weeks, a first in the recorded history of the state. Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne attacked both sides of Florida's peninsula and the panhandle, displacing thousands of residents, leaving tens of millions without power, destroying homes and businesses, and complicating election projections and campaign efforts in the critical swing state that Bush had won in 2000 by just 537 votes.

Kerry's Florida campaign came to a halt. A Massachusetts senator touring the wreckage would have been viewed as political and opportunistic. President Bush, on the other hand, interrupted his regular campaign schedule and came to the rescue, not once but four times, petitioning Congress for more than \$12 billion in relief money for the state. Governor Jeb Bush, the President's brother, capably steered

Florida through the storms and towards recovery, enjoying a boost in approval not unlike Rudy Giuliani's after September 11. And on November 2, the battered but grateful state delivered President Bush a decisive win by a margin of more than 375,000 votes. Twelve years ago, the president's father had been slow to visit and grant aid to Florida when the massive Hurricane Andrew struck during his reelection campaign. He was widely criticized for his neglect, and it might have cost him a second term. The younger Bush's rapid, sustained, and generous attention to the recent Florida hurricane crisis was, no doubt, a lesson learned from his father.

The current administration's public relations juggernaut seems to have been well served by the impeccable timing of events, beginning with September 11 and ranging from the obvious fall-out (code oranges, beheadings, messages from Osama) to the curiously oblique and

seemingly unconnected: a freak heatwave that killed 15,000 in France and effectively silenced that country's loud objections to U.S. designs upon Iraq; rolling blackouts in California and the Northeast; SARS outbreaks that dampened news of Asia's sparkling economy.

Add to this bizarre sequence of events the sudden arrival of four hurricanes in Florida during the high campaign season that effectively scrambled election projections and busted Democratic efforts while boosting the brothers Bush to savior status, and we must hoist our eyebrows to the heavens and wonder: were these storms made to order?

Weather modification, in popular imagination still consigned to the realm of fiction—usually in the hands of hyperbolic big screen villains like Lex Luthor—has in fact been the subject of scientific experiments since the 1940s, restricted by U.S. law in the 1960s, reportedly exercised in Vietnam, banned by a 1976 United Nations treaty (Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques), and quietly revived and pursued under the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) in the 1990s through to the present.

Today, what some critics have called weather modification experiments are conducted out of Gakona, Alaska, under the auspices of the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP). Operated by the Air Force Laboratory's Space Vehicles Directorate, HAARP is essentially a system of powerful antennas capable of inducing localized changes to the earth's delicate ionosphere, or upper atmosphere.

HAARP's antennas, erected in 1993 by a subsidiary of British Aerospace Systems are based on technology patented by Advanced Power Technologies (APT), a subsidiary of the giant oil conglomerate Atlantic Richfield Corporation (ARCO). In 1994, APTI and its patents were sold to E-Systems, a high-tech outfit retained by the CIA and other defense intelligence organizations for more than \$1.8 billion in projects, including \$800 million in "black budget" projects unaccountable to the U.S. government. E-Systems is now owned by Raytheon, one of the world's largest defense contractors.

Ionospheric heating systems similar to the HAARP facility in Alaska may also be found in Norway, Russia, and Puerto Rico. Cooking the ionosphere is dangerous business, but critics argue the results have wide application in the realm of strategic defense: enhancing submarine communications, disabling electrical grids, plunging enemy states into flood and

drought, and even creating and steering storms.

HAARP fronts as a humble weather station. It emphasizes on monitoring, rather than actively modifying, the ionosphere. The Department of Defense prefers that weather weapons remain seen as the stuff of science fiction blockbusters. But the regulations and treaties of the 1960s and 70s have apparently been abandoned to the dustbin of quaint utopianism, along with esperanto and the metric movement. Today, weather modification is viewed—under the radar, of course—as a valuable and effective means of 21st century warfare, presumably alongside the genotype-specific bioweapons that Cheney and Rumsfeld's Project for a New American Century hails as "politically useful."

Weather modification is also used in commercial farming and environmental applications. Russian companies advertise to manipulate weather for a fee. In 1997, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Malaysia had ordered a cyclone (as hurricanes in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific are called) to be created and steered along the coast to blow away smog, apparently from one such Russian operation.

In the U.S., weather modification is handled by defense-intelligence contractors who have profited enormously from Bush's runaway defense budget. But to suggest that these mercenaries may have been contracted to create and steer hurricanes into Florida in order to guarantee a Bush victory will have skeptics crying, like a chorus of trained parrots, "conspiracy theory!" even before a proper investigation has been undertaken. These parrots will likewise dismiss the matter of uncounted votes in Ohio, and get on with their sordid lives as Good Americans. But the matter is certainly worthy of investigation. For all of the interest in crime-solving among Americans—witness the staggering popularity of television programs like *CSI*, *Law and Order* and *Forensic Files*—it's a puzzling shame that we've been so thoroughly dissuaded from turning our eagle eyes to the investigation of state-level crimes, which offer the juiciest challenges of all.

In the wake of another stolen election, we should all become "conspiracy theorists," which is to say, independent investigators and researchers. We should share our findings loudly and repeatedly until the whole world listens. It only takes, after all, the flap of the tiniest of butterfly wings to send a monsoon halfway round the globe.

*Randall Sellers is an artist living in Philadelphia. He can be contacted at randallsellers@hotmail.com*

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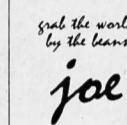
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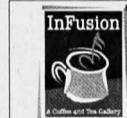
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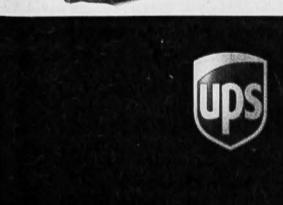


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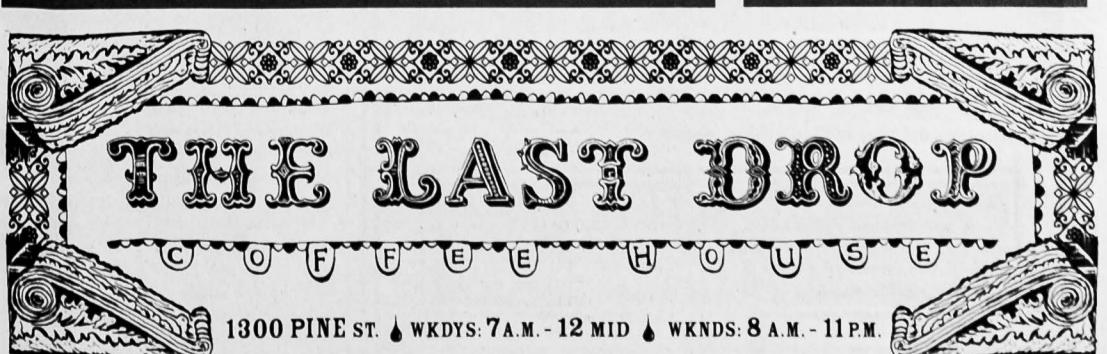
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**MEDIA****NEWSPAPER WARS***Knight Ridder's Star Faces Spirited Local Challenger*

BY LAURA COXSON



Last May, Knight Ridder Inc. did something it does every few months: it bought up a string of neighborhood newspapers, paying an estimated \$1.5 million for Jonathan Stern's *Star* publications. What had once been a rubber cement and graph paper operation in a shabby office near the Girard Avenue El would now be run out of Knight Ridder's suburban office park in Trevose and printed at their plant in Conshohocken, along with the company's flagship Philadelphia properties, the *Inquirer* and *Daily News*.

Within a few weeks, however, something odd happened. The readers rebelled. They would not read this revamped *Star*, with its strange new flag and typeface, its new office too far away to drop their first Holy Communion announcements in person. They would start a new newspaper. And lo, a new newspaper, the *Spirit*, was born on Girard Avenue.

But this is not just the story of a community rising up to defend itself against a multibillion-dollar corporation. It is the story of a neighborhood coming to terms with its own changing identity, the story of a place where people still pay attention to who owns their neighborhood newspaper.

Throughout the 1990s, Fishtown had year after year of the status quo—the same dozen corner taverns, the same static real estate prices—and it wasn't especially thrilled with that, either. But things started changing around the time that Standard Tap owner William Reed bought a house in the neighborhood and scores of young people began biking across town for a midnight pint at his remodeled Johnny Brenda's. Soon, men in gray turtlenecks started showing up at every open house. Then came the pilates studio, the coffeeshop and the vintage boutique. And all of a sudden, a big media company took interest in a little weekly newspaper.

"They like traditions, they like things to stay the same," says Maryanne Milligan, born and raised in Fishtown, of her old neighbors. Milligan, 43, lives in New Jersey, but has kept up on neighborhood goings-on through her older sister. The sale of the *Star* was a major going-on, and Milligan had heard talk in the neighborhood of starting a new one. Milligan and her husband, a Fishtown native just retired after twenty-four years in PepsiCo management, decided to learn more, and soon met Carol Denker.

The Milligans had long left Fishtown by the time Denker arrived. A Brooklyn native, Denker had come to Philadelphia with her first husband and two young daughters in the late 1970, one of those wiry young creative types whose life would be a constant struggle for balance. "I was born with a lot of talents; writing and music and art," she says now. "But I was always trying to find something more normal, not as intense." She worked as an art therapist, a portrait artist and schoolteacher; she married three times, but each one ended sadly. "In 1998 I was flattened emotionally and physically. I had to turn to myself and say, who am I?" She walked outside her door and found a copy of the Fishtown *Star* with a large advertisement inside seeking new writers. A few days later, she was hired to write at the old office on Girard Avenue.

In those days the *Star* was edited by Debbie Szumowski, who worked eighty hours a week on the *Star* and somehow inspired the same dedication in others. Szumowski put Denker to work on writing about "pancake breakfasts and oyster dinners" in the River Wards. Fishtown, Denker found, was a place of captivating contrasts. There were geriatricians living next door to rock musicians, philosophers next to general contractors, philosophers who worked as general contractors. The neighborhood's burgeoning creative side was balanced by a backbone of tradition and domesticity and warmth. There were also bullies and trash-strewn lots and occasional undercurrents of racism, but Denker, like Szumowski, was the type to see the promise in things, and she saw promise on every one of Fishtown's diagonal streets. She bought a house on Montgomery Avenue. "Basically I'm an optimist," she says. "There are all of these little pots of gold."

Patty-Pat Kozlowski, a longtime *Star* writer has continued writing for Knight Ridder's *Star* because its editor, Matt Pettacio, is a friend. Kozlowski, a neighborhood fixture for her stories, her sense of humor and her (once-450-pound) girth, had worked for the *Star* newspapers longer than anyone, and she felt compelled to help out her old colleagues. When she had a barbecue to celebrate the one-year anniversary of her stomach stapling surgery, Pettacio attended; when the sale was announced, she thought it would open the door for the men's fledgling journalism careers.

But the sight of the new *Star* newspapers, which came out on Wednesdays, still stacked up on the weekend, made her sad. "People used to wait on their doorsteps on Wednesday afternoons to get the paper," she remembers. Now people were waiting to see the new *Star*. Kozlowski, who works as an aide in City Hall by day, thought about moving her freelance journalism career to the *Spirit*, where her knowledge of and contacts in the Port Richmond neighborhood could extend their geographic reach. *Star* editors, in turn, began suggesting the paper could up Kozlowski's pay if

**Man Drives Cardboard Tank**

Had you been driving across the Spring Garden Bridge one afternoon early this September, you would have been forced to cede the right of way to a 175-pound, thirteen-foot long, bicycle-powered, wooden-framed cardboard tank. Driving the tank was 23 year-old Billy Blaise Dufala, a bright-eyed art school graduate running on an hour of sleep and a flat tire.

Dufala set out on his sortie at 4:30 p.m. from his studio at 41<sup>st</sup> and Hamilton. The tank's construction had been completed only minutes before, but there was no time for a test drive. Dufala was making a film whose timetable had been set long in advance. The crew had already arrived and, with the light fading, the tank had to roll out now.

As Dufala pulled out onto Spring Garden, a team of videographers and photographers including Matthew Kucynski, Peter Danz, and Nick Schummer drove alongside. Crew member Andrew Carrigan was ordered to run alongside the tank and capture a pedestrian view on digital video for the duration of the three-hour trip to Second and Market streets. Carrigan, who had shown up in dress shoes and a collared shirt but gamely purchased \$19 slip-on sneakers (Payless) and a "Secret Agent" t-shirt (I. Goldberg) for his grueling assignment. He managed to catch his breath briefly at the corner of 36<sup>th</sup> and Spring Garden streets when one wheel jammed up, and the parade came to a halt.

The crew couldn't untangle the tank's cardboard chassis from the lame cruiser inside, so it went back to the studio for a saw, cut a hole in one of the tank's crossbeams so the wheel could continue to rotate, and rode on the cruiser's rim. They had come too far to abort the mission now.

"I had had all these people come out to help me," Dufala explained. "I couldn't stop. You just gotta do it to get it done."

Peering out of the hot-dog sized eye-hole he had cut in the tank's front, Dufala had no

peripheral vision. Nor was he wearing a helmet. The bicycle fishtailed back and forth on its jerry-rigged suspension, forcing him to steer with his shoulder.

Somehow, he still managed to rotate the contraption's mighty cannon, scaring the Panzers out of any driver who encroached on his chosen lane. While trapped in Chinatown's rush hour gridlock, the driver of a golden sport utility vehicle rolled down his window.

"Why don't you shoot me?" he taunted Dufala. "I'm a Republican!"

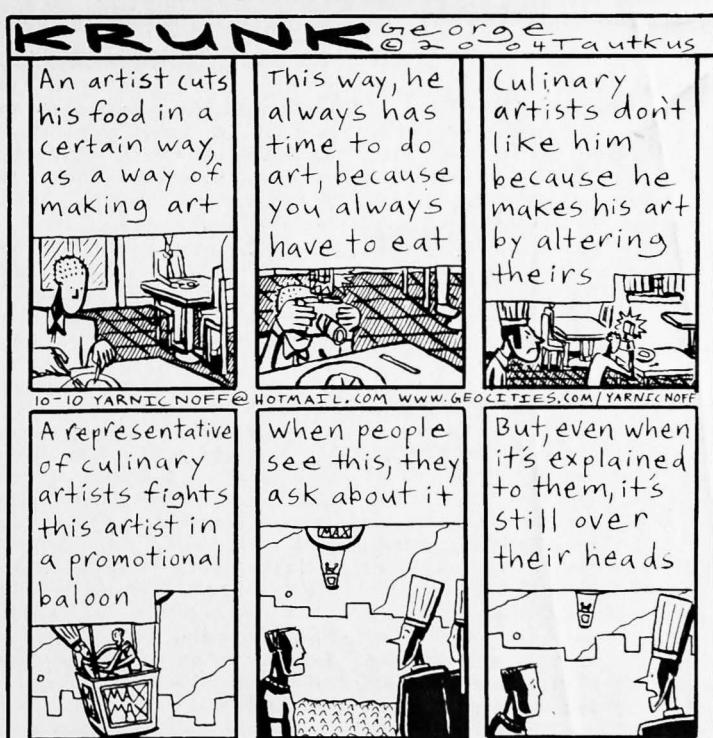
Dufala, who says his intent with the tank was not to make an overt political statement, but simply to explore his interest in mobile, public art that forces people to engage, pointed the cannon at the driver and screamed.

Otherwise, the evening commute proceeded without incident.

The tank, alas, is no more, cast away like an old scaffolding around the temple of Dufala's art. At 9 p.m. that same evening, Dufala parked it under a trestle at 11<sup>th</sup> and Wood streets. He returned at ten the next morning to find that someone had chopped up the tank's cardboard chassis and made off with the castors and the cruiser.

But don't feel too sorry for Dufala. This wasn't his first tank and it's unlikely it will be his last. In April, he constructed a similar cardboard tank for an exhibition at Spartaco Gallery, an immobile prototype that was dismantled after the show. When the idea for a rolling tank struck over the summer, he rebuilt the entire vehicle from scratch.

In addition to the tanks, Dufala has built a rolling toilet, and a rolling cheese grater, as well as organizing the tossing of 5,000 paper airplanes off a ten-story factory in South Philadelphia. Despite the flat and the missing cruiser, he considers the tank project a success and is already contemplating his next art scheme. "It's not going to stop here," he vowed. ~



she continued to write for their newspaper. Kozlowski confirmed the existence of a "bidding war" over her work.

And then there were the rumors. Kozlowski was having a beer at a neighborhood tavern when she first heard that "people at the *Star*" had been "telling people" that if she left the *Star* for the *Spirit*, it would be the death knell for her occasional gig penning opinion columns for the Knight Ridder-owned *Philadelphia Daily News*. "Nobody at the *Daily News* told me that," she says. "But when you hear something enough times..." she trails off.

For now, Kozlowski says, she's staying with the *Star*. Some advertisers, on the other hand, have made the switch, like Jim Lee, owner of Fishtown's Philadelphia Beer Company.

"All the customers had complained when the *Star* was sold to the *Inquirer* and moved to Trevose," he said. Lee had advertised in the Stern-owned *Star* and gave Knight-Ridder a shot. But, he said, they weren't very attentive.

"[The old *Star*] had a guy come in every week, but with the new company, they just came once in a blue moon. One holiday I forgot to put an ad in, and the next week, the guy from the *Star* came in. I was like, 'Are you kidding me? Why would you come the week after?'

Holidays are very good days for beer distributors." He gave up on the *Star* and has been running an ad in the *Spirit* ever since. The *Star*, he says, was quick to take notice.

"Ever since they saw my ad in the *Spirit*, they've been coming in every week, lowering the price." He has no plans to return to the *Star*, no matter how low the price gets. "That's not the point anymore," he said.

Pat Buzine, who's been selling ads for the *Star* for over twenty years, said she was unaware of any price wars, but did say that some long-standing *Star* advertisers were experimenting with running ads in both papers. "It's a new product," she said. "Competition keeps us fresh."

But to Denker, the experience of creating the *Spirit* was much more than bringing a new product to market.

"The first issue was very hard," she remembers. "It was almost like having a baby—you don't want to remember the pain afterward. But the response! In this day and age, there's that feeling that you never got more than what you pay for, that there's nothing human. But our writing and our graphics are full of extras. We give you a lot. We love doing this: that's the feeling we put across. And now, we're in a groove." ~



## VIEWMASTER

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## ESSAY

## THE PAST MELTS

Luc Tuymans's Paintings Shift &amp; Fade Like Memories

BY WILLIAM PYM

One day this summer, I was alone for two and a half hours at the Tate Modern art museum in London, without a care. I nursed a chic but feeble croissant breakfast for an hour, then watched Italian youths in futuristic neon fabrics play hacky sack on the gravel banks of the Thames. I sat on a stone bench to tie my shoe and straightened up to find myself in the middle of a swarm of 13-year-old girls eating packed lunches and shouting hysterically to one another about this or that unintelligible teenage thing. I went through an exhibition of paintings by a Belgian man named Luc Tuymans, twice. I wasn't positive that my Philadelphia pals were on the way. I did not know where they were or where they were going.

They came, miraculously, and we collided on the mezzanine's calfskin couches. While crossing south over Blackfriars Bridge on the way to meet me at the museum, my dear friend Brendan had picked some orange roses from the pavement. They looked lost, or discarded, and he wanted to give them to me when we made our rendezvous. These flowers, he discovered a few minutes later, had been laid for a girl who had jumped to her death from the bridge. He rushed to put them back, and did not mention this event to me until yesterday.

This Luc Tuymans is worth knowing. In the last fifteen years, his output and reputation have grown to the point where his name is now plastered on the walls of every London subway station and the lips of every art student. Luc Tuymans is a star.

Artists have forever been polemicists and

pederasts and playboys, living lives beyond the usual norms of decent behavior. Unblinking pursuit of obsessions is part of their allure. It's sexy. That said, in the last forty years, the art world has become a little *too* sexy, certainly too vain, and so inflated through the media and the market that personality itself has become a widespread artistic technique, a legitimate and popular means of making work. This public and conscious creation of one's own mythology is a new trick, and the artists who can turn it shine with a new brightness. Their mastery of self and self-promotion is now a viable alternative apprenticeship to, say, being ace at paint-handling or color theory or any of the old duffer stuff. Humility to a craft and calling seems a real drag when an artist can create an entire universe that uniquely suits him, and live alone inside of it, thriving in the most secure of bunkers.

Tuymans used to be a nightclub bouncer, and with a little prompting he'll recount the revolting beatings and bloodiness that hardened him as a young man making a living. It may explain why he doesn't fit in among the ranks of art stars, why his work neither utilizes nor courts stardom. His far-from-flashy painting style looks by turns washed-out, diminutive, sloppy, offhand and unfinished. There's zero fetishism of materials, no luxuriously expensive cobalt pigments on epic fine-linen battleships. He does not have time for that. He creates paintings over the course of one day. His imagery is elliptical, densely personal and politically wrought, ranging in theme from childhood reminiscences (is that a patchwork sample?) to Auschwitz (is that a gas chamber?)

and the tumultuous Belgian colonization of the Congo (yeah, what is that stretched leopard skin about?). They don't claim a convenient and easily interpretable artistic lineage; he's not interested in being a being a limb on an oak museum family tree. He has no gang of like-minded creators always on hand to reinforce what he does and prop him up when he's having his picture taken at the end of a bash. His paintings are not loaded with easy hormonal injections or a precise cultural geography apropos to the spiky, adrenal pages of fashion magazines—and when he does address magazine spreads, it is to copy the most banal of photo-graphs and scrape out their psychological insides to haunting, rather than congratulatory, effect. His work is unreservedly unassuming.

The paintings appear this way because he does not spend his days sizing up models in a corner of his airy artist's loft, or marvelling at hydrangea, or watching the light move across the floor. He does not memorialize his leisure time to sexy effect or distract with texts that send the synapses popping in spasms of convolution. There is nothing particularly wrong with any of that, but that is not what he does. In his marathon stretches of fourteen hours at the canvas, slathering wet paint on top of wet paint, he does not make paintings that celebrate the world of objects by creating more beautiful objects to fit into that world, to surround us. Rather, he describes a world that doesn't exist in any tactile place—not a complete parallel reality that one could hop into and stroll around, but an impossible and fractured world that we may have been to, once, but to which we will never again return.

The world I'm describing, as I reluctantly descend into the unfamiliar waters of psychology, is a place where memories are made and kept. The present surrogate of a past event, an echoic companion, is in conversation with the first bygone moment that created it, but its voice is muffled. We think our memories are like a collection of home movies, but the mind cannot record and store experiences like video tape; color, shape and sequence are not as true as when first felt. They are not false, exactly, they are simply something else. Complex neu-



Luc Tuymans, Maypole, 2000

rotic addenda like nostalgia, regret and trauma further scramble the original version. Bravely, Tuymans puts memory into a rectangular space.

The only Belgian painter of the last century more celebrated than Luc Tuymans is René Magritte. As a surrealist, Magritte mined the

subconscious and its symbols' intrusions into his everyday, and his images can be uncanny; they should, really, be completely sinister. Yet he made his tableaux familiar and soft on the eye, as conventional and polite as much a walk in the park as a walk in the park. His canvases have ended up beyond paintings, as citizens, and Magritte is now a cornball coffee mug artist, delivering far fewer nightmares and introspection than his ideas merit. The paintings are company. They keep you company.

Luc Tuymans, however, makes no set; he uses no framing devices. As for their companionship, I am unable to describe to you what it is like to stand in front of one of his paintings because the paintings have vanished from the wall. I can look at my notes and postcards or talk to my friends, but I cannot see the painting. I have my memory, but no image whose edges I can feel.

All that remains is a sense that something happened, somewhere, once.

I was surprised that Brendan had not told me about the flowers he had found for me on the bridge on the way to the exhibition. But he has told me now, and I will always remember them. And we had an awkward discussion about how a girl might have managed to commit suicide off such a short bridge in such a populous place, and we

will remember her now, too.

A terrific poet, Yves Saint Laurent, wrote in his diaries, "There are cheaters who use a power whose source is outside of them." Look him up. The art stars of the last two decades, the Jeff Koonses and the Richard Serras and the Damien Hirsts, devoured the physical

world for fuel and ballast. They believed that the present and the future of their constructed universe was theirs to mold, and critics and viewers gasped at their pride and ached for more. Luc Tuymans invites the past, a rich and limitless source, to take shape on his canvases because it happens to be on hand, already inside of him; this is a truer method than predicting what happens from stumbling around with heavy boots, planting flags. In our days of terror and giddy fearmongering, Tuymans's work threatens because it is peaceful. It brings us close to a disaster we cannot name.

Tuymans makes me believe that a positive future can be found in a collective respect and investigation of what came before, in his ethereal and silent reckoning. Grassroots politics have not been conducted in this way before, not in this part of the world, but perhaps a new strategy is in order. Tuymans is here to help inquisitive, creative people like you, my dear, who are trying to make sense of your place in America. It's a practice that belongs especially to you, but especially to me too; we don't have to compete over it.

If you seek confirmation of these themes from another stupendous wimp, have a look at Peter Schjeldahl, who wrote a perfect and long out-of-print catalogue essay for Tuymans's 1995 debut American solo exhibition, right here in Philadelphia at Moore College of Art and Design. There's a pile of catalogues, perhaps the last pile in the world, for sale over at 20th and the Parkway. It's worth the walk. Marijuana does not help you remember things, and you've nothing to gain by throwing letters away. Thank you for writing to me at 1221 North Franklin Street #3R, Philadelphia, PA 19122. It sure beats getting mail from the Republican Party.

William Pym is a painter and curator who has lived in Philadelphia for two years. An exhibition entitled "Fabulous Histories: Indigenous Anomalies in American Art," which he curated with his colleagues, Brendan Greaves and Jina Valentine, is on view through November 19th at the Carpenter Center for Visual Arts in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

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## VIEWMASTER

WORDS CAN'T DESCRIBE, BUT I'LL TRY

## Laura Owens at The Fabric Workshop

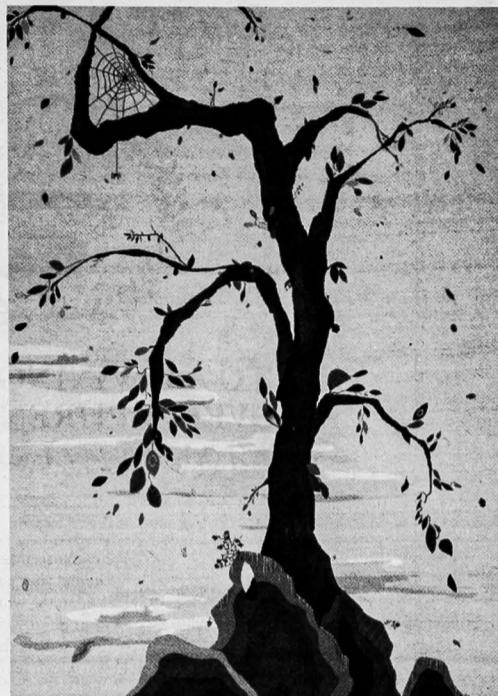
BY THERESA MARCHETTA

Laura Owens is busy. When the 34-year-old artist isn't juggling a tight international exhibition schedule, she's churning out paintings for patrons on a waiting list that reaches several years into the future. Her works, which are untitled, are busy, too, exploding with an array of symbols and signs. Frequently described as employing a "personal iconography," Owens relies on a stable of cartoonish figures. It's only reasonable to expect that someone might eventually ask what, exactly, these forms mean.

This September, Owens fielded just this question on the occasion of her exhibition, now closed, at the Fabric Workshop and Museum. She was asked why she chose a tree to be the subject of her new series of seven hand-embroidered prints on silk, what the tree meant. Either Owens wasn't sure or she didn't want to say, so she made a joke.

"I've never had an experience with a tree," she laughed.

Owens is known for a particular kind of realism that is boldly, yet loosely painted: her simple landscapes (impossibly steep mountains behind a veil of multi-colored leaves) and animals (googly-eyed monkeys hanging in wobbly trees) tenaciously integrate wildly dissonant colors, textures and applications. Her sky might be a pale and gradually painted azure while her leaf is a tremendous glob of orange, brown and purple. But though she depicts figures and recognizable objects that exist in the world, somehow they end up being



Laura Owen, Untitled, 2003

*photograph by Aaron Igler*  
background of sky—no horizon line, no other trees inside the picture plane to create the illusion of space. This lack of depth combined with her bold and textured paint application emphasizes and fetishizes the surface of the painting, so important to modern masters and their critical boosters.

Owens has the boldness and appreciation of color and composition of a modernist, but she funnels the formal interest in flatness, surface and materiality through whimsical shapes, monkeys and trees. The use of this subject matter allows Owens to smuggle the ideals and prejudices of modernist painting into her work without drawing the usual critical fire. She dresses her wolves in sheep's clothing.

At the Fabric Workshop she departed from her usual work and printed her designs on silk, which she then embroidered, replacing her joyfully defiant strokes of gummy paint with meticulously executed stitching. The effects of this translation are technically remarkable but ultimately reveal her conservatism.

When the startling parts of her paintings are rendered stitch by stitch in cloth, they seem controlled and predictable. The translation from canvas to cloth has deprived them of their spontaneity and immediacy. We find in this output not a brave foray into large-scale formalism, but something watered-down and empty.  $\sim$

Theresa Marchetta is an artist in Philadelphia.

abstractions. Really, Owens is a modernist painter in disguise.

When she paints a tree, she is not representing a specific tree that exists somewhere in nature; she is not invoking political ideals or playing with landscape traditions. Instead, she paints the *idea* of a tree, the gnarled and idealized image of Tree-ness. Nor do her paintings create convincing depth. She positions the tree on a lump of dirt in front of a

REVIEW  
RANDALL SELLERS*Drawing the Languid Aftermaths of Unspeakable Events*

BY R.J. SUPA



Randall Sellers, Untitled, 2004

**S**tanding six feet away, looking at a white gallery wall, Randall Sellers's drawings almost look like blank pieces of paper. Sellers draws with a light hand and a mechanical pencil, using an emery board to whittle its .3 millimeter lead down to a whisker. If you don't know to look for his futuristic, hazy landscapes, you might miss them all together. But galleries all over the world have begun to notice. During the past year, the 35 year-old former Mambo mover and Bean Café habitué, has shown in Boston, Paris, New York, Japan, and, just last

month, at Spector Gallery on Bainbridge Street. The show, entitled "New Lows," revealed a new phase of Sellers's work to his Philadelphia audience, one where figures begin to inhabit some of his miniature worlds.

Sellers likens his signature cityscapes to "the establishing shot that opens most films." In "New Lows," however, he begins to zoom in to imagine the characters that might live in these spaces, and how they might live. Sellers grew up in Honey Brook, Pennsylvania, about an hour west of Philadelphia, and "New Lows"

recalls the ephemera of the country: guzzled cans of beer, cinderblocks, dirt trails and acres of backyard junk lie alongside gaunt figures and bombed-out cars. The people haunt the foreground of the image while the background, their landscape, lurks as their own history. His cities are not decrepit, but nor do they work: broken brick walls, overgrown grass and empty roadways go nowhere. They inhabitants are a new kind of human figure, what Sellers refers to as "the hired help" and "tragic creatures." It's as though Sellers has dreamed up new versions of real people in his own history. These characters are finely and cleanly drawn, as beautiful and anxious as the scenery around them.

It seems there are really two drawings in each Sellers effort: the blurred wash of lines that reads as a blank from a distance, which the white expanse of the paper threatens to swallow completely, and the intricate details only visible up close. He forces the viewer's body into motion, insisting that they get up and stick their nose in the paper; he exerts a kind of control over this intimate relationship between his audience and his work, refusing to be passed by. You cannot be lazy with Sellers. He demands more than a sideways glance on your way to the door.

And Sellers's work has begun commanding attention from some very distinguished buyers. Four of his drawings were acquired by the Rothschild Foundation as a part of a planned bequest to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. And Peter Norton (he of the eponymous anti-virus software) purchased two Sellers drawings last January. Sellers has seen his work hanging in Norton's Central Park penthouse alongside canonical contemporary artists like Cindy Sherman and Felix Gonzalez-Torres, "the dream of a lifetime," he says.

With the Spector show behind him, Sellers says he will postpone future exhibitions for at least a year while he concentrates on building up a body of work. He hasn't completely left his abandoned cityscapes behind—most of the fifty or so drawings he completed this year were uninhabited. He also plans to record music, sculpt, take photographs, and paint in full color.  $\sim$

R.J. Supa lives in Philadelphia. He can be reached via email at [rjsupajr@gmail.com](mailto:rjsupajr@gmail.com).

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On Nov. 10, 2004, I started a blog at [www.jew.net](http://www.jew.net) to share my thoughts on the Internet. I wrote about my new hobby: BOREDOM & IGNORANCE, the dog and pony of the show we like to call "life." You may know them as well as we do. They are the handmaidens of unhappiness and the pets of distress. But you need not succumb to them any longer, thanks to the New Internet Sensation...

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## TO A NON-MOUSE

(In defense of the oft-malign'd undergarment, 'Tighty Whiteys')

My old friend was irate:  
"I've not worn them since eight!  
Boxers breathe, and they house my goods lightly."

But on men of small size  
They ride up our wee thighs  
And create a profile most unsightly.

Now you may think me vain  
'Cause I bear the mild pain  
That comes with the tight briefs of the masses,

Yet I feel rather smug  
When my trousers are snug  
Whilst my friend's pants are sporting two asses!



## THROUGH A CODPIECE RUSTY

(Or: 'He Sits To Conquer')

I now sit to tinkle—  
An untrustworthy winkle  
Has reduced me to such circumstances;

He cannot be trusted  
For he acts maladjusted  
Ev'ry time I unfastens me pants.

I suppose it's quite silly  
To shake dew off my lily  
In a manner that's deem'd a bit prissy

But if given the choice  
I won't make my front moist  
For a sissy stays dry when he's pissy.



## OLE CAPTAIN LONG

(A sea shanty)

Oh sing, sing a-long  
To this shanty o' sham,  
Tiddle-I, tiddle-O, doodle-day;

For our brave Captain Long  
Has just married a clam,  
Tiddle-I, tiddle-O, doodle-day;

He rode to the church on the back of a newt  
And slipped a gold ring 'round her muscular foot  
And now he subsists on a diet of soot  
Tiddle-I, tiddle-O, doodle-day!



## ODE TO A DIVINING SPIDER UPON A NOVELTY PHRENOLOGY BUST

(Or: 'A Curious Tale of Augury by the Ottoman')

Whose unseen fingers  
Guided your path  
O spider upon the white dome?  
Was it ghostly saint  
Or sociopath  
Who told you which temple to roam?

I toast my small pet,  
My good friends made merry  
And engaged in some light conversation;  
Whilst tipping our glasses  
He wove commentary  
'Cross a skullcap of droll demarcations.

O'er a porcelain scalp  
This wry critter ambled  
As guests chatted over some snacks;  
With each spark of wit,  
The wee spider scrambled  
To a square named SNAPPY COMEBACKS.

When affairs in my lap  
Were in grave disarray  
To ZIPPER POSITION he fled;  
When he felt my banter  
Was drifting astray  
He descended down EGO's forehead.

In an hour or two,  
I started to tire  
Of playing arach-a-nid Ouiji;  
But dear reader, fear not,  
He didn't expire—  
I just flicked his fat bobbin to Fiji.

The gist of this story  
Is easily read:  
If you find you're engaged in a chat  
And you've a small critic  
That dwells on your head  
You'd best keep him under your hat!



## MY LOVE SPURNETH YAMS

(A naughty sonnet for my lady)

Nigh all things written in Nature's green hand,  
My love doth hold closely to her soft breast;  
But of all that liveth in mud or sand,  
None else but yams she doth hotly detest;  
This tuber offends both in taste and touch,  
Her palette, which fussy, cannot abide;  
She wails 'what an unpalatable mush!'  
Spits them out, and pushes yon plate aside;  
Yet I love a fat yam, both mashed and candied,  
Although my appetites' often misplaced;  
For when Nature sprouts a yam 'neath my belly,  
My lady's spuds flee 'fore I can give chase;  
Oh ladylove, please stop spurning my yams—  
All I desire is to pinken your hams!

NOTE: A word of congratulations to Mr. Josh Nims and Ms. Noelle Dames, who were wedded in the Parnassian glens behind the Philadelphia Art Museum in full view of friends, family and the Divinity of Nature on the evening of Saturday, October 9th. Lord Whimsy, who conducted the ceremony, wishes to express his humblest gratitude for the privilege and his best wishes for the happy couple. — W.





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APARTMENT FOR RENT: One roommate needed for four-bedroom apartment located at 45th and Chestnut. Currently occupied by three males in twenties and one cat. It is a large apartment with spacious living room and full kitchen. Location is convenient to University of Penn and Drexel University campuses as well as SEPTA public transportation. Off street parking is available. Rent: \$363/mo + utilities (mainly cooking gas and electric). The spot is open now and we are looking to fill it quickly. Contact Mike 267-693-7477 mmk37@drexel.edu or Jay 215-662-1223 (After 8).

ART FOR SALE: New "Imaginary Botanicals" posters by local Philadelphia artist Craig Stover. Guaranteed to be the one thing in the room you can't resist looking at. Bright and colorful, they often contain a hidden odalisque form. Learn more about the series and start your art collection with these affordable posters available on the artist's web site. Get the picture at picturemaker.com.

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EVENTS, NOVEMBER: At World Cafe Live, 3025 Walnut St. Every Monday: Open Stage, hosted by Bruce Torres. 6 p.m. signup, 8 p.m. show. 11/15, Robyn Hitchcock, \$20/\$25. 11/19, Shawn Colvin, \$40. 11/26, Chick Corea, \$45. 11/28, Minnie Driver. \$17.

EVENT, 11/18/04: Come meet our region's most promising entrepreneurs present their innovative business plans and hear Gary Erickson, Owner and CEO of Clif Bar Inc., a model "sustainable" business, tell his inspiring story. This is a free event and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. We hope to see you there! When: Thursday, November 18, 4 p.m. - 7 p.m. Where: The Sheraton Rittenhouse on Rittenhouse Square.

EVENT, 11/20/04: Spa Sensations is hosting a Pamper Yourself Day featuring Manicures, Facials, Massage and Pedicures. Time: 2pm - 6pm on Saturday November 20 at 3901 Main Street in Manayunk, 2nd floor. All are welcome. Call 267-971-9409 for more information.

EVENT, 11/20/04: The Waldorf School of Philadelphia's second annual holiday festival. A crafts show with quality work by local artists and handcrafted toys and gifts made by the school's handwork group.

Learn something about the Waldorf approach while celebrating the festive holiday season. There will be a special children-only gift room and children's crafting room; puppet plays and magic shows; live music performances; homemade lunches, baked goods and foods to go.

Saturday, November 20, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. 7500 Germantown Avenue, 215-248-1662.

EVENT, 11/26/04 thru 12/19/04: Show of Philadelphia artists at the White Dog Cafe at 3420 Sansom St. to benefit the Lancaster Avenue Autonomous Zone. All proceeds from the fabulous art you take home with you will go to LAVA, a new public gathering space in West Phila. with room for a library, darkroom, printing press, gallery, performance space, computer lab and office space where people working for a better world can share ideas and resources. Participating artists include Zoe Cohen, Matt Phelan, Maria Kydonieus, Mikel Elam, JJ Tizou, Edward Epstein, Michelle Wilson, Januario Estevez, Harvey Finkel, Rodney Atienza, Gerard Brown, Matt Height, Mandy Katz, Kellie Ricks and others. www.lavazone.org

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Meetings run from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., and we are now set up for every format except DVDs: videos, CDs, LPs and cassettes. Information on next meeting's topic, membership, location etc: 215-224-6995, ralph3@comcast.net.

**OPINION:** Meat is bad for everybody and everything

Consumers, slaughterers, health-care workers, animals, air, water, soil, you name it. Meat and other animal products routinely sicken people one way or another, while plant foods consistently make people healthier and stronger. Think this is an unsourced opinion? Check out Meat Facts for the daily documentation of it, as mainstream press articles prove this assertion over and over again. Big Meat is going down in a big way, and Meat Facts is the blog that chronicles its decline and fall: http://soyjoy.blogspot.com

**PERSONAL:** Let's start an abusive relationship. I will beat you out of love. You will love how close we get when we fight. You will hold me tight as I scramble to be free from your crushing embrace. You will push me away when all I want is to fly towards you and choke you or claw your face. We will be unified by our mutual antagonism. Two halves made into a whole. A bond that will never break, forever yours.

**POLITICAL:** I know that it is utter madness, with all the obstacles and cynicism that exist, to try and make a real difference in this world, to try to effect genuine change for the good. But I also know this: it is madness not to try. This city, this nation and this world are bleeding for lack of compassion, for lack of humanity, for lack of understanding, for lack of listening and for lack of love. And if we do nothing, there is no reason to expect the system to change. Many people are concerned that the current political system is incapable of addressing our pressing human needs. Come and participate in a discussion group to explore ways we can creatively build something better. Call (215) 552-8888 for information.

**POLITICAL:** Socialists Wanted! Solidarity is an independent, non-sectarian socialist organization committed to the struggle for democratic workers' power, the replacement of capitalism with a new society without exploitation or oppression, and to the liberation of all oppressed peoples through their own freedom struggles. Visit www.solidarity-us.org and www.phillysolidarity.org for more information.

**PROPOSAL:** We are starting an organization that pairs curators with farmers. Each curator will spend two weeks in a fertile valley carefully observing the visual tactics of farmers: the spatial relationships maintained by crop rotation, the effects of categorization and organization on color and form in the garden and the orchard, the asymmetry of outbuildings, and the sculptural resonance of agricultural tools. Some curators have also surveyed the effects of the stall, pen, and field on the performative bodies of livestock. If selected please be prepared to carefully balance your visual investigation with your farm chores; you will plow, till, milk, and prune when you are not collecting data, deconstructing the landscape, and determining how this residency will be incorporated into the gallery/museum. We have still not decided on a name for our fledgling foundation for the arts, but are open to suggestions. Please post all replies in this space by sending them to editors@philadelphiaindependent.net, under the subject line "Classifieds."

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**TAPESTRY WORKSHOP:** A weekend weaving intensive for beginners. Friday evening: slides and discussion of tradition and contemporary tapestry (flat weave, pictorial). Saturday and Sunday: thread loom and learn tapestry weaving techniques such as flat weave, shape double weft interlock, pick & pick, half passé technique, passé oblique. By the end of the workshop, students will have completed a sampler, thus understanding the techniques used to weave a pictorial tapestry. Many nuances and references to French tapestry techniques. Also an exploration of materials and alternative techniques. Design and finishing also discussed. Looms and yarns provided; please bring a fork (to use as a beater/comb) and scissors. Maximum six students, at 915 Spring Garden St., Nov. 19, 20 and 21. \$125. Call Kathryn, 215-769-1016.

**THERAPIST FOR HIRE:** I am a psychotherapist with 28 years of experience. I now have an office in Rittenhouse Square and I specialize in treating adults who have depression, anxiety, life transition issues, serious or fatal health problems, or are grieving a loss. I also do some life coaching. Please contact Wendy Forman, Ph.D. at 215-340-1554. I accept some forms of insurance and have a sliding fee scale.

care the most, have none. Meanwhile all the White House staff, and every single senator throughout our fifty states has the very best health insurance our tax dollars can buy. Although the president has never called me to thank me, I say, "Mr. President, you are welcome, yes, you are most welcome. Although I have no health insurance for my own care, it makes me happy to know that you and your lovely wife and twin daughters are well, and safe." Now, if anyone would like to get together with me to sing Allen Ginsberg's version of "Amazing Grace," write me at CAConrad13@AOL.com, or give me a jingle at 215-563-3075.

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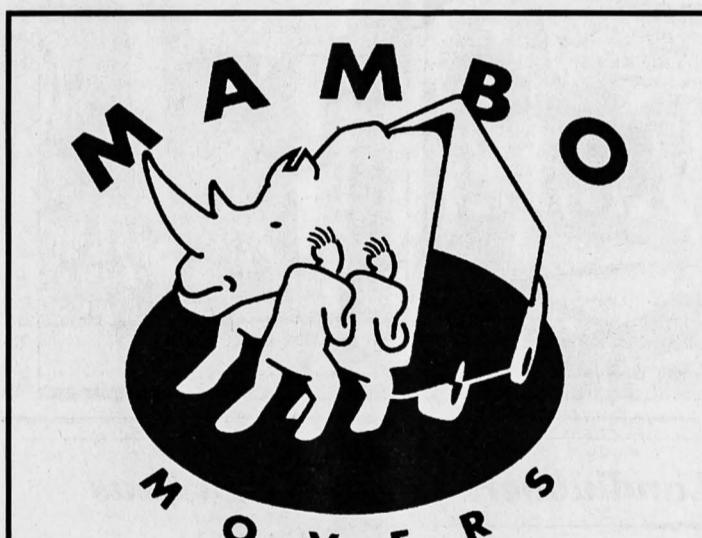
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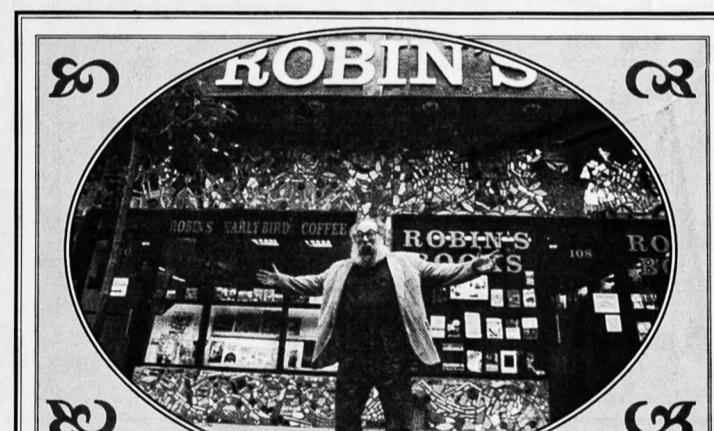
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• 1613 N. 7TH ST., 14' x 45' — \$17,500  
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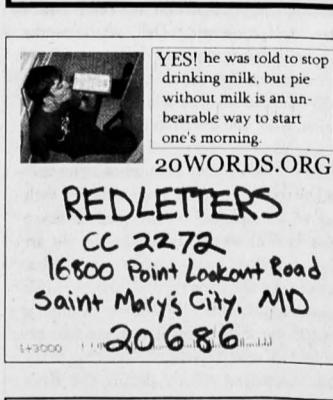


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PUT YOUR PANTS ON

HOROSCOPE: SCORPIO: October 24-November 21. Well, well, well. Aren't we mysterious and profound? Sure, sure, Scorpio. You're a little volcano bubbling under the surface of a calm sea. But hark! The plates shift and the mirror cracks and this month, my friend, you just may go totally crazy.

# NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
<b>Things that I am Thankful for:</b> 1. Good Health. 2. Enough Food. 3. The Indefinite Postponement of Apocalypse. 4. Funny Animals, ie Ladybird. 5. Google. 6. Canned Goods. 7. Telecommunication & Other Technologies. 8. Pleasant memories. 9. Warm covers.	<b>1</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> The Dillinger Escape Plan, Every Time I Die, Zao, Misery Signals @ the Tropicadero, 1003 Arch St., 6 p.m., \$15.	<b>2</b> <b>GAMES:</b> Why do children like them so much? I can't remember. Tears fall to my desk like so many drops of rain. I will count them and keep score, and declare myself Winner! Reassured, I cry no more.	<b>3</b> <b>BOOK SIGNING:</b> Charles Santore, Jr., children's book illustrator, @ the Charles Santore Free Library, 932 S. 7th St., 6 p.m., Free.	<b>4</b> <b>READING:</b> Open reading @ Molly's Bookstore & Cafe, 1010 S. 9th St., 8 p.m., Free. Monthly.	<b>5</b> <b>ART TALKS, YOU LISTEN:</b> Paul Schimmel @ the Fabric Workshop.	<b>6</b> <b>ART TALKS, YOU LISTEN:</b> Ann Hamilton, Judith Tannenbaum @ the ICA.	
<b>7</b> <b>CONVENTION:</b> Nerdcon @ the Rotunda.	<b>8</b> <b>TRIVIA:</b> Simpsons trivia night @ the Khyber, 56 S. 2nd St., 9 p.m., \$5, 21+.	<b>9</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> Devendra Banhart, Six Organs of Admittance, Andy Cubic @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., 8 p.m., \$10.	<b>10</b> <b>MEETING:</b> Lancaster Avenue Autonomous Space (LAVA) Meeting, 4134 Lancaster Ave., 7 p.m., Free. Monthly.	<b>11</b> <b>DANCE:</b> Les Grandes Ballet Canadiens de Montreal @ the Zellerbach Theatre, 3680 Walnut St., 7:30 p.m., \$32-\$44.	<b>12</b> <b>PARTY:</b> Undergirl record release party @ Tritone, 1508 South St., 10 p.m., \$7, 21+.	<b>13</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> Jay-Z @ Wachovia Center, 3601 S. Broad St., 8 p.m., \$37-\$102.	
<b>14</b> <b>TECHNOLOGY:</b> Are Cell Phones the Headphones of the Streets? Or are Headphones the Headphones of the Streets? Is this a stupid question?	<b>15</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> The Delgados, Crooked Fingers @ the First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St., 8 p.m., \$8.	<b>16</b> <b>PARTY:</b> DJs Art, Cubik and Immortal, spin punk, new wave, glam, rock @ the Khyber, 2nd Floor, 56 S. 2nd St., h Nader's state coordinator.	<b>17</b> <b>LECTURE:</b> University of Delaware's Dr. & Jonathan Laser present "The Ethics of Dream Interpretation," 17 Logan Hall, 249 S. 36th St., 5 p.m., Free.	<b>18</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> Dolly Parton @ the Wachovia Spectrum, 3601 S. Broad St., 7:30 p.m., \$37-\$57.	<b>19</b> <b>LECTURE:</b> "The 'Civilization' of the Cinema" @ Sloght Foundation.	<b>20</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> Animal Collective, Black Dice, Growing & Orlene @ Vox Populi, 1315 Cherry St., 4th Floor, 9 p.m., \$13.	
<b>21</b> <b>MUSIC:</b> The Dead Milkmen, Electric Love Muffin, F.O.D., Nixon's Head @ the Tropicadero, 1003 Arch St., 6 p.m., \$15.	<b>22</b> <b>WARNING:</b> Some persons who frequent Internet "chat rooms" and "message boards" operate under false pretenses and with names not legally theirs. Proceed with caution.	<b>23</b> <b>READING:</b> William T. Vollman presents "Rising up and Rising Down: Some Thoughts on Violence, Freedom and Urgent Means" @ the Free Library, 1901 Vine St., 7 p.m., Free.	<b>24</b> <b>DJ:</b> DJ Diplo @ the Ukrainian National Home (U.A.C.A.), 847 N. Franklin St., 10 p.m.	<b>25</b> <b>ART:</b> "Non-Retinal" a presentation of new work by blind sculptor David Stephens @ Sloght Foundation, 4017 Walnut St., Wed-Sat, 11-6. Free. Through Dec. 31.	<b>26</b> <b>RIOT:</b> Critical Mass, a gathering of bicyclists on the west side of City Hall, 5 p.m., Free. Monthly.	<b>27</b> <b>ART:</b> "Defining Modern" works by architect and designer Florence Knoll Bassett, at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 26th St. and the Parkway, \$10. Through April 10.	
<b>28</b> <b>ADVICE:</b> Please, listen, all of you. Put down your drinks and put out your cigarettes before heading to the dance floor. It's awkward enough without the props.	<b>29</b> <b>GROUP RIDE:</b> Annual Major Taylor birthday bike ride.	<b>30</b> <b>LECTURE:</b> Pat Buchanan @ the National Constitution Center, 525 Arch St., 6:30 p.m., \$12. Call 215.409.6700 for reservations.	<b>FLOWER OF THE MONTH:</b> 	<p><b>M</b>uch like Palladium is the official footwear provider of the French Foreign Legion and Army, the Chrysanthemum—"mum" for short—was the official badge of the Old Chinese Army Like the Plum Blossom, Orchid and Bamboo, it was considered one of the "noble plants," those of the Lower Classes were not permitted to plant them. Mum's the word. Ahaem.</p> <p>But the Japanese would not be outdone! Their emperors once sat upon Kiku, or Chrysanthemum, Thrones. The flower, a symbol of the Sun, was also featured on their Imperial Seal. Its unfolding petals are a symbol of Perfection! A single petal placed in the bottom of a wine glass indicates a long &amp; healthy life! Impossible to refuse the Gold (Chrysos) Flower (Anthos).</p> <p>There are, of course, more specific meanings to be communicated in a gift of chrysanthemums than simple Optimism or mere Good Cheer. Red indicates Love, Good Luck &amp; (the related but distinct sentiment of) Best Wishes; White means Truth; Yellow communicates the sad but useful feeling of Slighted Love. Throughout the British Isles &amp; North American continent, Chrysanthemums are a welcome addition to any occasion. But in Italy, they are mostly associated with death. So it goes. So it goes.</p>			

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**2004 FALL SEASON**

November 9 **T.P. Luce**  
Author of, "theBloc: Words, Pictures and Baltimore City in Black, White, Gray," A new book of photography and poetry 8:00PM — \$5.00 Admission  
Followed by *Open Mic Poetry Nite*

November 18 **African Sculpture Symbols of Culture**  
Exhibit Opening Featuring Camden's Own Unity Community African Dance Ensemble 4:30PM-7:30PM — Free Admission  
Exhibit will run until February 28, 2005  
Gallery Hours: Mon-Thu 10-4, Fri 10-8, Sat 12-2

November 23 **Open Mic Poetry Nite** — \$5.00 Admission

November 26 **"God's Trombones"**  
A Play By James Weldon Johnson.  
Directed by Ozzie Jones

December 19 **Barrymore Winner for Best Direction of a Musical**  
Black Nativity, Freedom Theater, 1994-1995  
Fridays & Saturdays at 8PM, Sundays at 5PM, \$10  
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**Free Library of Philadelphia LECTURES**  
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**Daniel Libeskind**  
*Breaking Ground: Adventures in Life and Architecture*  
Friday, December 10 at 8:00 p.m.

An international figure in architecture and urban design, Daniel Libeskind was chosen in 2003 as the Master Plan Architect for the World Trade Center reconstruction. Born in 1946 to Holocaust survivors in Poland, Daniel Libeskind draws on his uncommon background and global perspective to explore ideas about tragedy and hope, and the way in which architecture can memorialize and shape human experience.

For Tickets (\$12, \$8 students) Call UpStages: 215-569-9700 • A book signing follows the event.  
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**CROSSROADS MUSIC**  
Saturday, November 13 at 7:30 pm • Root and Branch  
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Saturday, November 20 at 7:30 pm • Philadelphia Crossroads  
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Rough Trade Records. Feat. Alison from Riosound!  
**BLANCHE**  
12 Bands  
Upstairs: DEEP C spine shows

**OUTRAGEOUS CHERRY**  
Rambow Records  
**LEE, JIE-WON** *Man of Gau*/*Man Connection*  
**MEDICATIONS** *Medicard Records*  
**CREEPING WEEDS**  
Upstairs: GILL WILL THAMES plays 70's to turn of the century punk

**INTERNATIONAL POP OVERTHROW**  
BASTARDS OF MELODY - BLANK PAGES -  
HEATH HAYNES & THE CRYING SHAMES - POP ART -  
SMASH CHAINS - TIM BUTLER - MATTHEW BUDWELL

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Man. of Don Cabell, Sharn & Stew, Lyr, Smank & Relent

**TURING MACHINE**  
Man. of Pittsburghers & Panthers

**EUPHONE - SOUTH CONGRESS**  
Upstairs: ROCK ITTS, DJ Joe spins garage / rock / punk

**HOLLY GOLIGHTLY**  
Damaged Goods Rec. Man. of Thee Headcoates  
**THE WOGGLES - MONDO TOPLESS**  
Upstairs: CREAM YOUR JEANS  
DJ Rob & Jason give you shiny cheezy ass shake

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**19 LECTURE:** John Mowitt & Gregory Flaxman present "The Civilization" of the Cinema" @ Sloght Foundation, 4017 Walnut St., 6:30 p.m., Free.

Once upon a time in the 1980s, a philosopher named Gilles Deleuze postulated that sound films had resulted in the "civilization" of the cinema. He then threw himself from a window and died. These events are not causally linked. Tonight, Professors John Mowitt and Gregory Flaxman will present on the occasion of the closing of the Laura Owens exhibition at the Fabric Workshop and Museum. Judith Tannenbaum, the Richard Brown Baker curator of contemporary art at the Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art, and multi-media installation artist Ann Hamilton will speak on the occasion of the ICA's 40th anniversary lecture series. Tannenbaum, who served as curator, associate director, and interim director at the ICA between 1986 and 2000, organized Hamilton's 1995 "lumen" exhibition. She bravely explores the heady regions of sound, memory, language and imagination. Go forth, adventurer, and join the quest team. It's free.

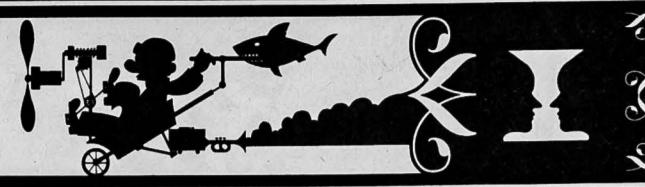
**07 CONVENTION:** Nerdcon at the Rotunda, 4014 Walnut St., Noon, Free. With DJs Chatty Cathy, Trishylicious & Dave Ghoul. Door prizes.

**29 GROUP RIDE:** Annual Major Taylor birthday bike ride. Meet at St. Mary's Church, 3916 Locust Walk, 10 a.m. Call 215.386.0316 for more information.

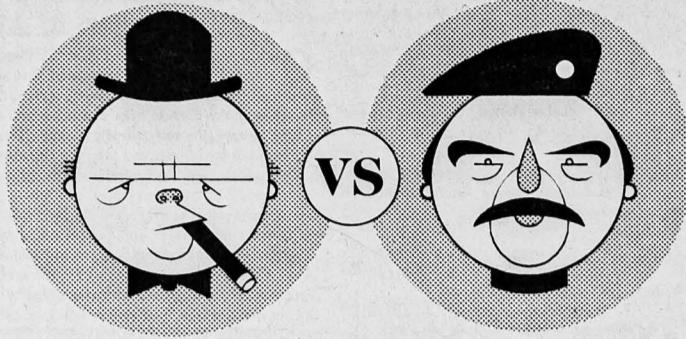
Worcester, Massachusetts: Paris of the 80s. The tee-shirt says. But while Paris has birthed many a hero, has any ever been quite like Major Taylor? Born Marshall Walter Taylor in 1878 in Indiana, he moved to Worcester in 1895. Fond of performing bicycle tricks while wearing a soldier's uniform (hence the nickname), he became the American racing champion just two years after going professional. The first internationally acclaimed African American sports star (hence the heroism) still faced racism at home, where a Worcester developer tried to buy back his property after realizing it had been sold to a black man. He was refused membership in the League of American Wheelmen, sabotaged on the course, refused hotels, and denied victories. After retirement, the Major's fortunes fell. He died penniless in Chicago at the age of 53, and was buried in an unmarked grave. History has since done its best to rescue him. He was reburied in Illinois, and the Indianapolis velodrome was named in his honor. A Philadelphia DJ adopted his moniker, many years ago. And there's the Neighborhood Bike Works annual Major Taylor birthday ride. The Major may have been a hundred years early to make Worcester the Paris of the 80s. But, you know, they built him a statue. That was nice of them.



THE BUREAU OF  
**PUZZLES & GAMES**



## AUTUMN OF THE PATRIACHS

*This Month's Puzzles: Relatively Speaking***WINSTON  
CHURCHILL****Who Said What? Match the Maxim to the Man**

BY HENRY FLOSS

You are likely unaware of the secret which I am now about to tell you: I am not the Bureau's first Chairman. Please, be assured that my desk was not stained with the spilling of bad blood. Suffice to say that when I inherited my post, I inherited also a wooden filing cabinet far too heavy to lift, much too large to throw. It remained, and in my idle hours I explored its contents. My predecessor was a gentle man; he drew the strength for his arduous Bureau duties from the words of Winston Churchill. Now, I know little of our transatlantic brethren, but he who made a habit of afternoon tea, he knew much. My predecessor had filed Mr. Churchill's quotations into alphabetized categories: Enemy, Evil, Germany, Lady Astor, War. As I made my way through the cards, I shivered. Something was amiss. I had heard this voice before, but where?

I realized that Mr. Churchill is the rhetorical ancestor of another world leader, one ruthless, and incarcerated. And while Mr. Hussein lacks Mr. Churchill's very great moral character, I sensed something deep and common, a weighty stubbornness. I sensed that these two men were not such distant relations after all. I yearned to puzzle out more. Incidentally, I hope it does not shake you to learn that I am not the Bureau's original Chairman. My friends, do not build castles in the sand! None of us is ever first in line.

**DIRECTIONS:** To the right there are thirty-six pithy sayings. Draw a line from the words to the mouth of the man who wrote them. Answers are listed below and to the right.

1. Yours is a society which cannot accept 10,000 dead in one battle.

2. Although prepared for martyrdom, I preferred that it be postponed.

3. History is the reservoir in which exists, and from whose depth we derive, the laws that elevate the nation to assume its great mission for humanity.

4. A love of tradition has never weakened a nation, indeed it has strengthened nations in their hour of peril; but the new view must come, the world must roll forward.

5. Such was the labor of the past. From its womb it begets a doctrine, new in spirit, in dress and color.

6. Let all cowards, piggish people, traitors and betrayers, be debased.

7. I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.

8. History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it.

9. One of the most important qualities of any leader is saving others from death, not by marking the dark ditches on the road, but by preventing those who do not see the marks from falling into the abyss.

10. The price of greatness is responsibility.

11. Keep people's secrets and don't tell them to others or use them against them.

12. If anyone attempts to intimidate you, repel him and tell him that he is a small midget while we belong to a nation of glorious faith.

13. I have always felt that a politician is to be judged by the animosities he excites among his opponents.

14. I am afraid that some narrow-minded people may interpret what I say as merely panegyric of a state which the speaker is part of.

20. We are the offsprings of the sword and the pen.

21. Don't talk to me about naval tradition. It's nothing but rum, sodomy and the lash.

22. The untamable horse will be killed if it is let loose without rider or rein to control it. It may fall into a ditch which will destroy it or break one of its legs. Its role on the basis of its duties will end.

23. Don't be attracted to easy paths, because the paths that make your feet bleed are the easiest.

24. Every day you may make progress. Every step may be fruitful. Yet there will stretch out before you an ever-lengthening, ever-ascending, ever-improving path. You know you will never get to the end of the journey. But this, so far from discouraging, only adds to the joy and glory of the climb.

25. Is it the people who draw the pol-

icy of a state, or is it, rather, the officials in power or the leaders who draw this policy? I say: policies are drawn by the official in charge of the state, and particularly, by the leadership.

15. He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire.

16. A fanatic is one who can't change his mind and won't change the subject.

17. What I wish for you and for myself, is that we make our choice without hesitation, get together and not separate, work and not be lazy ... and not allow our enemy and his evil choices to succeed and defeat us, after subjecting us to bitter pain and accomplishment that no one could accept.

18. We shall defend, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.

19. Never give in—never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy.

20. History will be kind to me, for I intend to write it.

21. We shall show mercy, but we shall not ask for it.

22. Will the Americans ever do what is right?

23. History is the doctrine of the present that is linked to the spirit and values of the glorious past. Its spirit and high effect exist in you, valiant men and women.

24. Virtuous motives, trammelled by inertia and timidity, are no match for armed and resolute wickedness. A sincere love of peace is no excuse for muddling hundreds of millions of humble folk into total war. The cheers of the weak, well-meaning assemblies soon cease to count. Doom marches on.

25. The evil ravens and evil crocodiles still foster wickedness and would never cease their communication with their disappointed hopes, despite the fact that their deep wounds and disgrace can not be rubbed out with the passage of time.

26. Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing ever happened.

SADDAM HUSSEIN: 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 12, 14, 17, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 31, 34, 35

WINSTON CHURCHILL: 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 36

*This Month's Game: The Metamorphosis***MAKE THIS POOR DONKEY INTO A MIGHTY HORSE**

Residents, film stars, and those of a more literary bent all scour the archives of the past for heroes, digging up the bones of Giants to gain a little height in the world. Perhaps you have Mary Lou Retton to inspire you. I myself have Sam Loyd, mid-century Master Puzzler and Ingenuity Maker of Games, and his famous Pony Puzzle. Of this spectacular brainteaser, he once wrote, "Now the world has been made to believe that the last donkey is last donkey." The Pony Puzzle will be a capital test of the acumen of the past compared with that of the present generation to see how many clever wits of today can solve it."

Mr. Loyd had no idea. Indeed, the world is moving so very rapidly that it makes me ill. But at last we trade our kingdom of stopwatches for a paper horse! Dear readers, dismember the tilt-a-whirl of progress with me and give your brain the pleasure of the Pony Puzzle.

**DIRECTIONS:** Cut out the six pony pieces very carefully, and arrange them into the best possible figure of a horse. Use glue or tape as necessary. Answers and Winners will be announced next month.

**On the Giving of Thanks**

If we are honest about these things, we should not be embarrassed to admit to one another that the state of being alive can be, on occasion, a Real Drag. When I turn my radio dial to the news programs and live call-in programs, what rewards my patronage? I am bombarded with depressing accounts of corruption, gunplay and assorted instances of fraud; jewel thieves and the like. It so worries me to listen that I cannot even bear to lift my hand to the telephone in order to dial the number of the station so that I might voice my opinions in the public forum. I am met with the same wasteland of information in the illustrated pages of the newspapers of record, and although I myself own no television, I have been made to understand that a similar state of affairs plagues the moving movies.

In these troubled times, how can a simple and scrupulous man look forward to a seemingly infinite succession of days? Eyes shaded, peering into the gloaming of the years ahead, we see no light; no tunnel distorts our perception of depth! From whence to draw the will to go on?

There are some moments, of course, when the veil of fog lifts. Pumpkin Picking in the cold, crisp autumn air, for instance, or Rock Concerts. But one cannot simply wander through fruit patches all day long or make oneself deaf in the pursuit of blissful oblivion! That would be immodest, and unbalanced. We are not in the business of shooting off our ankles to spite our teeth. Nor must we collapse in a heap, oppressed by the bleakness of local and world affairs. We must have our pleasures, and our hopes, too, and they must not be

too difficult to obtain.

November is the time to sweep all this Gloom and Doom under the rug, to rise early and turn a blind eye to bedsores. When I raise my mug of spiced cider this Thanksgiving, dear readers, it will require no puzzling to proclaim in a loud, strong voice the things I am thankful for! Foremost among them are maps, charts and graphing notebooks; next among them is You.

Dear readers, without each and every last one of you there would be no Puzzles, and even worse, no Games. I know that we have both struggled with some of the changes in our Bureau as of late. I know that we have not had Prizes in several months now. I know. But comfort yourselves with the fact that we still have Glory, Pride and best of all, the intangible, unfailing and undying triumvirate of Companionship, Camaraderie and Mutual Affection. In our Age of Despair and Disillusion, this is no trifle.

Dearest puzzlers, I will not say it again. When we next sit together at a table heaped with turkey and other delights, and you ask me for what I am thankful, do not blush when I say, "You."

Your Obedient Friend,  
*Henry Floss*  
Henry Floss  
Chairman, Bureau of Puzzles & Games

**HENRY FLOSS'S MONTHLY INVENTION***(Apologies to Rube Goldberg)***THE MUD SHIP***Your Cheap and Environmentally Friendly Wagon*

Safely nestled in the wheelbarrow (A), piled high to pump steady pedals (B). This power gear shaft (C), which powers propeller (taken from discontinued Chinese fighter plane) (D), which powers the Mud Ship. The steering mechanism is provided by another shaft, this one swivel-mounted, and attached to a rudder consisting of one stuffed and flattened Nurse Shark (E). Though the Mud Ship uses no fossil fuels, for the proto-industrial ambiance that gains respect on the open road, set electric vacuum cleaner on reverse (F), and leave a squaring trumpet blast of dust and dirt in your wake (G). If this device proves unsuccessful, try public transportation, but do not question the Mud Ship.

**Let's get \_\_\_\_\_**

Always good times.

Happy Hour Mon-Fri 4-6 pm

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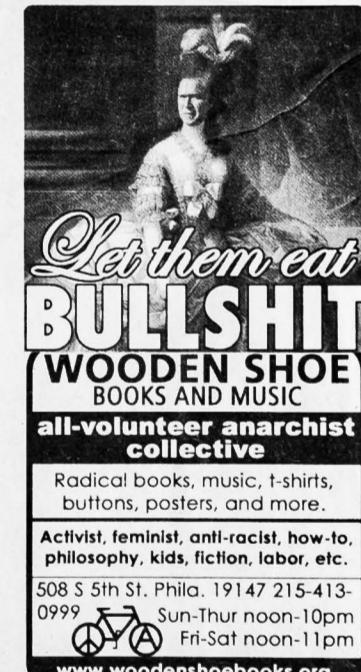
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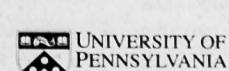
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